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General

GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

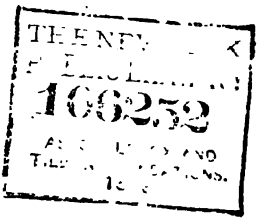
NONCONFORMISTS,

HELD IN MANCHESTER, JANUARY 23RD, 24TH, AND 25TH, 1872.

AUTHORISED REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

MANCHESTER:
ALEXANDER IRELAND & CO., PALL MALL.
LONDON:
HODDER & STOUGHTON.

1872.

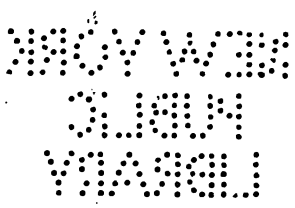


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63, Brown-street, Manchester.

Secretaries of Central Nonconformist Committee
86, New-street, Birmingham.

Secretaries of Liverpool Nonconformist Association,
16, Blackstock-street, Liverpool.



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GENERAL CONFERENCE OF NONCONFORMISTS.

In accordance with a Resolution passed at a joint meeting of the Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool Nonconformist Committees, a General Conference of Nonconformists was held in Manchester, on January 23rd, 24th, and 25th, 1872, to consider "The Educational Policy of the Government, the General Relations "of Nonconformists to the Liberal Party, and the necessity of "Organising the Political Power of Nonconformists throughout "the kingdom, for the Promotion and Defence of the Principles "of Religious Equality."

The Conference was originally summoned for 13th and 14th December, 1871, but was postponed in consequence of the serious illness of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

The Conference was convened by the following circulars, which were sent to representatives of all Nonconformist Churches and Organisations in England and Wales.

"Nonconformist Association, Manchester,
"63, Brown Street, Corner of Booth Street,
"October 2nd, 1871.

"Dear Sir,—In accordance with a resolution passed at a joint meeting of the Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham Nonconformist Committees, a General Conference of Nonconformists will be held in Manchester, on the 13th and 14th of December next, to consider 'The Educational Policy of the Government, the general Relations of Nonconformists to the Liberal Party, and the necessity of organizing the Political Power of Nonconformists throughout

the kingdom, for the Promotion and Defence of the Principles of Religious Equality.'

"It is of the utmost importance that there should be at this Conference as large an attendance as possible of the representatives of Nonconformist feeling throughout the country, and we venture earnestly to ask your aid in effecting this result.

"The Conference will be composed of delegates from Nonconformist congregations, delegates from local Nonconformist Committees, delegates from any Nonconformist organization, such as the Baptist Union, the Congregational Union, the Committee for Sufferings (Society of Friends), delegates from Nonconformist Meetings called for the purpose of supporting the aims of the Conference, and individuals whose presence the committee may deem desirable; and you will render valuable service by co-operating with those in your neighbourhood, who sympathise with the object we have in view, and securing the early appointment of such delegates.

"It will greatly facilitate the necessary arrangements for the members of Conference, if the names and addresses of the delegates be forwarded as soon as possible to Mr. Jameson at this office.—We are, dear sir, yours,

"ALEX. THOMSON, M.A.,	*Hon. Secs. of*
"JOS. CORBETT,	*Manchester Com.*
"R. W. DALE, M.A.,	*Hon. Secs. of*
"H. W. CROSSKEY, F.G.S.,	*Birmingham Com.*
"J. J. STITT, J.P.,	*Hon. Secs. of*
"W. CROSFIELD, J.P.,	*Liverpool Com.*"

"Nonconformist Association,
"Manchester, 63, Brown Street,
"December 13th, 1871.

"Dear Sir,—The Committee in charge of the arrangements connected with the General Conference of Nonconformists deeply regret the inconvenience to which Delegates have been put by its sudden postponement in consequence of the alarming state of the Prince of Wales. They are assured, however, that the course which they have pursued will meet with the approval of Nonconformists generally throughout the country, and they sincerely hope

that no effort will be spared to make the meetings of the Conference, which are now fixed for the 23rd, 24th, and 25th days of January next, as successful as they certainly would have been if the original arrangements had been carried out. It will be a great disaster if this delay should result in even an apparent diminution of interest on the part of Nonconformists generally in the cause in which we are engaged, or of determination to secure from Government the just recognition of our principles. It becomes increasingly clear every day that nothing short of the most decided utterance and united action on our part is likely to have any weight with the Government in the matters which concern us.

"The Committee therefore venture to press upon you the necessity of your presence, or of another delegate in your place, at the meetings to be held in the end of January. In order to facilitate arrangements they beg that you will have the kindness to intimate as early as possible, whether or not you can attend the Conference, and what accomodation you will require, if any.

"By filling up the accompanying form and transmitting it within ten days to the secretary, Mr. A. P. C. Jameson, you will greatly oblige us.—We remain, dear sir, yours faithfully,

"ALEX. THOMSON, M.A., } *Hon. Secs. of the*
"JOS. CORBETT, } *Manchester Com.*
"R. W. DALE, M.A. } *Hon. Secs. of the*
"H. W. CROSSKEY, F.G.S.. } *Birmingham Com.*
"J. J. STITT, J.P., } *Hon. Secs. of the*
"W. CROSFIELD, J.P., } *Liverpool Com.*

"P.S.—The necessary tickets of admission and the programme of Conference, will only be sent to such delegates as intimate their intention to be present, and accommodation will only be provided for such as request it."

Advertisements, in the terms of these circulars, were inserted in the principal newspapers of the country.

The subjoined programme was issued:—

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF NONCONFORMISTS.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Papers not to exceed twenty minutes, and Addresses not to exceed ten minutes in length.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24th, 1872.

Introductory Address: RICHARD JOHNSON, Esq., Manchester.
Business Announcements.

CHAIRMAN—E. MIALL, Esq., M.P.

	Subjects.	*Readers.*	*First Speakers.*
Morning 10-30. Not later than 12-30.	"Religious Equality in the Universities"	Prof. A. S. WILKINS, M.A....	J. HEYWOOD, Esq., F.R.S. NEVILLE GOODMAN, Esq., M.A.
	"The Endowed Schools Act and the claims of Dissenters."	Prof. SHELD. AMOS, M.A. ...	Rev. J. JENKYN BROWN. W. M. FAWCETT, Esq.

CHAIRMAN—WM. CROSFIELD, Esq., J.P., Liverpool.

	Subjects.	*Readers.*	*Speakers.*
Evening 6-0 p.m. Not later than 8-0.	"Payment of Fees to Denominational Schools."	Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY, F.G.S.	Rev. J. G. ROGERS, B.A. Rev. J. A. PICTON, M.A.
	"State Grants for Educational purposes."	Rev. C. WILLIAMS	Prof. F. E. ANTHONY, M.A. Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25th, 1872.

CHAIRMAN—W. MIDDLEMORE, Esq., J.P., Birmingham.

	Subjects.	*Readers.*	*First Speakers.*
Morning 10-30.	"Political Relations of Nonconformists to the Liberal Party"	HENRY RICHARD, Esq., M.P.	J. J. STITT, Esq., J.P. Mr. R. W. DALE, M.A.
	"Political Organisation of Nonconformists."	J. CHAMBERLAIN, Esq.	

CHAIRMAN—RICHARD JOHNSON, Esq., J.P., Manchester.

	Subjects.	*Readers.*	*Speakers.*
Evening 6-0 p.m.	"Registration of Marriages." "Burials Bill." ...		REV. ALEX. THOMSON, M.A.
	"Irish and Scotch Education Bills."...		Rev. J. P. JARVIS, Limerick. Rev. H. RENTON, M.A., Kelso.
	"Mr. Miall's Motion for Disestablishment."		Rev. JOHN KELLY.
	Closing Address Vote of thanks to the Society of Friends, &c.....		R. JOHNSON, Esq.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

[Consisting of Seven Delegates from each of the Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool Committees, by whom the Conference has been summoned.]

MANCHESTER.	BIRMINGHAM.	LIVERPOOL.
Richard Johnson, J.P.	W. Middlemore, J.P.	W. Crosfield, J.P.
Alex. Thomson, M.A.	R. W. Dale, M.A.	W. J. Lamport, J.P.
Jos. Corbett.	H. W. Crosskey, F.G.S.	Thos. Snape.
Alex. Mc.Laren, B.A.	Geo. Dawson, M.A.*	Saml. Pearson, M.A.
S. A. Steinthal.	J. Chamberlain.	J. J. Stitt, J.P.
Jos. Phythian.	Jno. S. Wright.	Ed. Mounsey.
Jos. Thompson.	T. J. Moore.*	Richd. Johnson, J.P.

* In consequence of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Dawson and Mr. Moore, J. Russell, M.D., and T. Kenrick, J.P., were placed on the Committee.

The above Committee will meet at the Friends' Meeting House on January 23rd, at 2-30 p.m., and January 24th and 25th, at 9-30 a.m.

No business other than that on the Programme can be introduced without having been previously submitted in writing to the Conference Committee, and accepted by them.

RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

Jas. Boyd.	Wm. Milne.	Elkn. Armitage.
J. A. Beith.	E. Helm.	Stanway Jackson.

Reception Room (Friends' Institute, corner of Mount-street and Peter-street) will be opened on the afternoon of Tuesday, January 23rd, from half-past three, and on Wednesday and Thursday, from 9-30 a.m.

SECRETARIES OF CONFERENCE.

MANCHESTER.	BIRMINGHAM.	LIVERPOOL.
Alex. Thomson, M.A.	R. W. Dale, M.A.	J. J. Stitt, J.P.
Jos. Corbett.	H. W. Crosskey, F.G.S.	Thos. Snape.

Upwards of 2,500 delegates were appointed, and 1,885 delegates were present at the Conference, representing more than 800 Nonconformist Churches and organizations.

In the course of the proceedings of the Conference, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted, with the exception of No. X., from which there was one dissentient.

I.

"That this Conference pledges itself to support, by all means in its power, the measure to be submitted to Parliament next session, for the removal of the restrictions which confine many fellowships and headships of colleges to persons in, or intending to take, Holy Orders, and which confine other offices and emoluments connected with the Universities and Colleges to members of the Church of England; and is of opinion that no settlement of the question at issue with regard to the National Universities can be regarded as final and satisfactory which does not include the repeal of the regulations requiring college authorities to provide religious instruction for members of the Church of England and to cause the services of the Church of England to be read in the college chapels, and the withdrawal of the visitatorial powers now held *ex-officio* by Bishops of the Church of England."

Universities.

II.

"That this Conference, while acknowledging the great merits of the Act for the reorganisation and reform of Endowed Schools, passed in the Session of 1869, is strongly of opinion that the policy of the Endowed Schools Commissioners, as illustrated in the numerous schemes already issued, some of which have been sanctioned by Parliament, contravenes the spirit, and, in some cases, the letter of the Act and the principles of religious equality. While the Conference observes with satisfaction the removal from the new schemes of the clerical *ex-officio* governors, it regards with strong disapproval the fact, that of the first governing bodies appointed, in nearly every instance, a large majority of the governors belong to one political and ecclesiastical party. Their disapprobation is still further increased by the fact, that the principles upon which these governing bodies are constituted secure the perpetuation of this injustice for an indefinite period. The Conference makes no special demand on behalf of Nonconformists as compared with members of the Church of England, but claims that the extreme extent to which the co-optative principle is recognised should be restricted, and that the area of popular selection should be so enlarged that Nonconformists may take

Endowed Schools.

their fair share with the rest of the community, and this Conference earnestly trusts that the Government will decline to lay before Parliament any schemes which are open to the objections urged in this resolution.

"That this Conference further requires that the constitution of the Commission should be revised, seeing that the Commissioners have hitherto shown such a decided leaning to one denomination as to forfeit the confidence of Nonconformists."

III.

"That this Conference, regarding the payment by School Boards of the fees of children attending Denominational Schools as involving the imposition of taxation for the support of the creeds of differing churches, requests Mr.——,* immediately on the assembling of Parliament, on behalf of the Nonconformists of England and Wales, to bring forward a motion for the unconditional repeal of the 25th clause of the Elementary Education Act, and the omission of the words from clause 74 providing for the payment of the whole or any part of the fees of any child where the parent satisfies the School Board that he is unable from poverty to pay the same, and pledges its members to support this motion with all the resources at their command."

Payment of Fees.

IV.

"That this Conference protests against the payment of public money to schools under private, irresponsible, and denominational management, as inconsistent with the due recognition of the principles of religious equality, and as rendering impossible the development of a truly national system of education, and claims that all public money voted for the purposes of education should be administered through representatives of the people popularly elected."

Privy Council Grants.

V.

"That this Conference is of opinion that in any national system of education, the School Board and the State should make provision solely for the secular instruction which all children may receive in common, and that the responsibility of the religious education of each district should be thrown upon voluntary effort."

Religious Instruction.

* The name was left for subsequent determination.

VI.

"That after grave deliberation this Conference is compelled to conclude that the educational policy, unfortunately adopted by Her Majesty's Government, is hostile to the interests of religious liberty, since—

Political Policy.

"(1) Under the **Elementary Education Act** sums of money may be paid from the rates for the support of sectarian schools.

"(2) By the grants in aid of denominational schools, which have been largely and unnecessarily increased, in addition to the payments made from the rates, sectarian organizations for education may be entirely sustained without private subscriptions, and, as the result, the education of the people is to a large and increasing extent given into the charge of the clergy of the Church of England, and the priests of the Church of Rome.

"Every effort having been made to induce the Government to re-consider a policy which reverses the whole course of modern legislation, this Conference, believing that the cause of religious freedom is of more importance than any ties of party, appeals to the Nonconformists of Great Britain to declare that they will not accept as a satisfactory representative any candidate for a seat in the House of Commons who will not pledge himself to the amendment of the Education Act, in the sense, and to the extent, of the propositions adopted by this Conference; and further, to make it clearly understood that, except under the pressure of great national exigencies, they will not give any such candidate their support."

VII.

"That this Conference is of opinion that when the time has come for a complete consolidation and amendment of the Marriage Laws of the United Kingdom, no amendment can be satisfactory to the Nonconformists which does not provide for the absolute equality of all citizens before the law.

Marriage Laws.

"Further that in reference to the Burial Service this Conference claims equal rights for all citizens in the National or Parochial Church and Burial Grounds; and, while just regard is had to existing vested interests, this Conference protests against any exclusive privileges being accorded to any section of the community in the interment of the dead." Burial Laws.

VIII.

"That the members of this Conference, while repudiating on the grounds of religious principle, on their own behalf, all grants from public money to sustain denominational educational organisations, cannot recognise any claim of the Roman Catholic Church to obtain support from the State in propagating its religious faith in the schools of Ireland; and must insist that the duty of the State to confine itself entirely and solely to secular instruction should not be departed from in any part of this empire." Irish Education.

IX.

"That the principles affirmed in the previous resolutions of this Conference ought to guide the educational policy of the Government in all parts of the United Kingdom; and that determined opposition should be offered to the first educational measure by which they are again violated. That when the Scotch Educational Bill is brought before the House of Commons, the members of this Conference will employ their earnest efforts to assist their friends in Scotland in securing that it shall contain no provision which will permit religious teaching at the public expense or give support to denominational schools." Scotch Education

X.

"That in the event of School Boards permitting religious communities to provide, at their own cost, for the giving of religious instruction out of school hours in buildings provided by the board,—a proposal upon which no opinion is pronounced,—this Conference desires to declare that in no case should the schoolmaster be employed to give that instruction." The Schoolmaster.

XI.

"That this Conference desires to express its cordial approval of the action of Edward Miall, Esq., M.P., in submitting to Parliament last session a motion for the disestablishment of the Churches of England and Scotland, and its admiration of the courage, vigour, and consistency with which throughout his public life he has illustrated and defended the principles of religious equality."

Motion of Edwd. Miall, Esq., M.P.

XII.

"That the best thanks of the Conference be given to the Society of Friends in Manchester for the generous kindness they have shown in freely granting to the Conference the use of their Meeting House; and also to the Committee of the Friends' Institute for the courtesy with which they have promoted the convenience and comfort of the delegates and visitors by placing the rooms of the Institute at their disposal."

Thanks.

XIII.

"That the heartiest thanks of the delegates here assembled be given to the Chairman, Secretaries, and members of the Committee of the Manchester Nonconformist Association for the zeal, energy, liberality, and ability with which they have discharged the heavy and responsible labours which have been imposed upon them in connection with this Conference—a Conference which marks an epoch in the history of Nonconformity, and in the history of the religious liberties of this empire. That this Conference also desires to express its cordial gratitude for the hearty and generous hospitality which its members have received from the friends in Manchester and its neighbourhood."

Thanks.

Secretaries of Conference.

Alex. Thomson, M.A., Joseph Corbett,	Manchester.
R. W. Dale, M.A., H. W. Crosskey, F.G.S.,	Birmingham.
J. J. Stitt, J.P., Thos. Snape,	Liverpool.

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF NONCONFORMISTS.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23RD, 1872.

PUBLIC MEETING, FREE TRADE HALL.

CHAIRMAN—H. RICHARD, ESQ., M.P.

Mr. H. RICHARD, M.P.: I have to announce that so great has been the pressure to obtain admittance to this hall, that it has been necessary to close the doors. It has, however, been arranged to hold a supplementary meeting in the Friends' Meeting House. The chair at this meeting will be taken by Mr. Henry Lee; and it will be addressed by Professor Wilkins (Owens College), and the Revs. S. A. Steinthal (Manchester), R. Chew (Newcastle), L. D. Bevan (London), and H. W. Crosskey (Birmingham).

The Rev. ALEX. THOMSON, one of the hon. secretaries, read a number of letters which had been received from gentlemen interested in the movement, who were unable to attend the meeting.

Mr. E. A. LEATHAM, M.P., wrote:—

"I must be in South Wales at the time fixed for the meeting, and I regret, therefore, to say that it will not be possible for me to attend it. I avail myself, however, of this opportunity to state how glad I am that the Conference has been summoned. In the presence of a Government so active in legislation, it is essential that Nonconformists should be thoroughly on the alert, otherwise irreparable damage may be done to our cause almost before we are aware. By our cause I mean that of absolute religious equality. Keeping this end constantly before our eyes, we must take care, if possible, to prevent all legislation which may have the effect of imperilling or retarding its accomplishment. I am convinced that the power of Nonconformists in the Liberal party, if vigorously exerted, is paramount. No Liberal Government will seriously array themselves against it. We have only to show ourselves wide awake, and to stand firm, and we must command the situation."

Mr. G. O. TREVELYAN, M.P., wrote :—

"I am engaged to a public meeting at Exeter on the 23rd of January, which will compel me to decline the invitation with which the Nonconformist Association Committee have honoured me. It would have given me pleasure to have taken part in a movement of which the object is worthy, and the means employed legitimate and practical. A Churchman myself, I have long been unable to understand how a Nonconformist could conscientiously vote for a representative who was unwilling to disconnect religion from the fetters of State control, and the ignominy of State support."

Mr. J. MILLER, M.P., dating from Edinburgh, said :—

"I very fully sympathise in the object in view, and in evidence of that I may state that I was one of the sixty members who voted with Mr. Henry Richard on his motion on the English Education Bill. I am sorry to add that when our Scotch Education Bill was in Parliament, in 1869, we got small aid from the English members, and when we wanted what is now so much sought for by English Nonconformists."

The CHAIRMAN then rose and said: Ladies and gentlemen, you are all aware that the series of meetings, of which this is the first, was intended to have been held about the middle of the last month; but at that time a dark cloud was hanging over the Royal family of this country, and by reflection and sympathy, over the whole nation; and the gentlemen at Manchester who had charge of the arrangements for the meetings and conferences, knowing the feelings of deep loyalty which have distinguished the Nonconformists (hear, hear, and cheers)—at all times, judged that it would not be in accordance with their wishes to meet together to discuss exciting political questions at a moment when not only that cloud existed, but when there was a daily possibility of its darkening into a still deeper shadow. Happily that danger has been averted—(cheers)—and we, in common with the rest of our countrymen, cordially rejoice that the life of the heir to the throne has been spared, and there is nothing better that we can wish for the young Prince who has been brought back, as it were, from the verge of the grave, than that he should lead as useful and honourable a life as his distinguished father—Prince Albert the Good—(cheers)—and that when he comes to reign—which God grant may be at a distant time—he may follow the example of his illustrious mother, of whom all men will acknowledge that she is one of the best sovereigns that ever occupied the British or any other throne. (Loud cheers.)

And without falling into the strain of somewhat fulsome and ferocious loyalty in which some people have thought it right to indulge at this crisis, I believe that we, as Nonconformists, can, with the utmost sincerity, take upon our lips the burden of that stirring song by which my countryman, Mr. Brinley Richards, has so well interpreted the national sentiment, and say, "God bless the Prince of Wales." (Loud cheers.) And now, gentlemen, I suppose that we are meeting here to-night ostensibly and avowedly as Nonconformists, not, I hope, to the exclusion of many Liberal Churchmen who are at one with us in our principles and aims; for it would be most ungrateful for us to forget, or to neglect to acknowledge, that among the members of that Church there are, and always have been, some of the most firm, and faithful, and fearless advocates of religious liberty to be found in any community whatever. (Applause.) Still, speaking in a broad and general sense, we are here to-night as Nonconformists, and let the audacious truth be confessed, as political Nonconformists. (Applause.) There are those who think that there ought to be no political Nonconformists—(laughter)—and our excellent friends of the Church of England are deeply concerned that we should imperil and damage our spiritual interests by touching anything so common and unclean as worldly politics, and we ought to be the more indebted to their brotherly charity that in the excess of their solicitude for our spiritual welfare, they seem to have forgotten their own. (Loud laughter.) For it is pretty well known that they are not total abstainers on the question of politics; indeed, to some it would seem as though their whole system was drenched and saturated in politics, but I suppose on the principle that what is one man's food is another man's poison—(laughter)—so what they consider to be poisonous and deleterious to our spiritual nature, is only wholesome and nourishing food to theirs. (Renewed laughter.) Well, there are others who are inclined to censure us because we meet as Nonconformists, and not as Liberals. They charge us with stirring up mutiny in the Liberal camp, withdrawing ourselves from our former associates. Gentlemen, does any man imagine that it is any pleasure to us to stand in a position of isolation, and still less of antagonism to our old allies? It is not our fault. We are isolated, not because we have withdrawn from association, but because we have been for-

saken. (Hear, hear, and applause.) We contend that we, in common with the whole Liberal army, having been conducted by our leaders to an advanced position at the time of the conflict in respect to the Irish Church, and having gallantly carried and occupied that position, our comrades have thought fit to beat a retreat, and have left us alone exposed to fire along the whole line of the enemy, and they are angry with us because we do not join with them in this retrograde movement. But I hope that Nonconformists are like that little drummer boy who was captured by the French, and who, when he was asked to give a specimen of his skill by beating a retreat, said, "The British army never retreats." (Loud applause.) And so I say the Nonconformist army never retreats. But the question now is, gentlemen, what we are to do, what is the course that we ought to pursue? Well, I have anxiously sought for light and guidance from all quarters to enable me to answer this question satisfactorily. I have not confined myself to the utterances of those with whom I am accustomed to be associated; I have watched carefully those great public instructors who are supposed to utter words of wisdom. Of course I have read carefully the *Times*—(laughter)—and the *Times*, as is its wont, has written very ably, and I must say very temperately, on both sides of the question in respect to which we are at issue with the Government. I have looked into the pages of our jaunty friend the *Daily Telegraph*, who tell us that the provincial Dissenters—for he seems to labour under the impression that the Dissenters are confined to the provinces—are, in his own flowery language, "dowered with very little influence," and that the whole of the Nonconformist secessionists may, if they like, go home in a four-wheeled cab. (Laughter.) I have listened to the sardonic oracle of the *Saturday Review*, but as its utterances consists mostly of sneers, that is a kind of commodity which can afford neither comfort nor guidance to anybody. (Laughter.) I have sat with as much meekness as I could command at the feet of the *Spectator*, which of late has been brandishing its pedagogic ferule over the Nonconformist millions of this country with an air half-authoritative and half-patronising, which would be rather offensive if it were not altogether so amusing; and from the *Spectator* I learn this, that we are a presumptuous and impertinent lot—(laughter)—

who having, after a struggle of nearly two centuries, been admitted to the enjoyment of some of the ordinary rights of British citizenship, ought, after such unexampled generosity has been shown us, to be ashamed of ourselves to be now, like Oliver Twist, asking for more—(laughter)—and it warns us that if we are not more amenable to counsel, if we are not more submissive to discipline, if we are not prepared to sacrifice our convictions and our interests to the convenience of party, something—I hardly know what, but something very dreadful—is going to befal us, and not the least dreadful part of our destiny, no doubt, will be that we shall incur the lasting displeasure of the *Spectator* and its friends. I have consulted, of course, our great voluntary censor, our guide, philosopher and friend, Mr. Matthew Arnold, that rather tart apostle of sweetness and light—(laughter)—and really it is a little amusing to observe the manner in which Mr. Arnold administers his rebukes to us. He charges us with want of meekness and lowliness, or to use his own language, we do not sufficiently cultivate and exemplify "the mildness and sweet reasonableness of Christ." But the spirit in which he does this reminds me of a story told by one of the inspectors of Church of England schools in his report to the Committee of Council, in which he speaks of the insufficient and altogether unsatisfactory character of the kind of religious education given at day schools, and as an illustration he tells us this anecdote. "At a particular school," he says, "I asked the teacher, by way of starting some religious lesson, to let the infants sing some simple hymn. She at once responded to the suggestion, and, seizing her cane, shook it in the face of her little flock in the gallery with an expression that must have made every individual hair of every individual child to stand on end, and in a voice as harsh as one imagines that of the file in the fable to have been, she snapped at them these words, 'Now, sing, "Christ is merciful," will you?'" (Loud laughter.) So Mr. Matthew Arnold, shaking his classical cane at us, says, "You narrow-minded, anti-national, bigoted, bitter, smug, vulgar, ungrateful, hole-and-corner, provincial, Non-conformist Philistines—(laughter)—how dare you not exemplify the mildness and sweet reasonableness of Christ?" (Renewed laughter.) Well, Mr. Matthew Arnold, at any rate, has a plan of

dealing with us. You know that De Foe, rather more than a century ago, published a clever satirical pamphlet, which he called "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters." The way that he recommended was their utter extermination. He said that the most tolerant Church in the world had borne with them so long that it was impossible to bear any longer; and therefore, he says, if one severe law were made and punctually executed, that whosoever was found at a conventicle should be banished the nation, and the preacher be hanged, we should soon have an end of the tale; and so admirably had he preserved the tone of grave irony, of which he was so great a master, that one excellent clergyman declared that next to the Holy Bible and the sacred comments, it was the most valuable piece in his library. (Laughter.) Mr. Arnold, I must do him the justice to say, has a plan which is not so severe as that of De Foe, but which, if it could be carried into effect, would be quite as effectual. He also maintains that we have no right to exist in this land, that a voluntary minister has no more right to open a chapel and preach the Gospel in any part of England than any individual would have to constitute himself a voluntary magistrate without the authority of the Lord Chancellor; but instead of proposing to exterminate us, Mr. Arnold's proposal is that we should exterminate ourselves. (Laughter.) He permits us to perform the Japanese happy despatch, to take ourselves out of the way; he wishes that the spirit of Nonconformity should be absorbed in a great ecclesiastical Brahma or Vishnu, and that its body should be buried out of sight so effectually that never again shall any

> "Untaught knaves, unmannerly,
> Dare bring its slovenly, unhandsome corse
> Betwixt the wind and his nobility."

(Laughter.) It seems to me then that from these sources we do not get much effectual light or guidance. I suppose that you are not willing to go out of existence, even to avoid offending the Hellenic tastes of Mr. Arnold. I think you believe with me that we have already done some good service to this country—(loud applause)—that England would not now be the place so well worth living in and living for as she is, but for the exertions and the sacrifices of the Nonconformists. (Loud applause.) We believe

we have yet a work to do in connection with the development of the destinies of the country. (Hear, hear.) What, then, are we to do? In the absence of guidance from these sources to which I have referred, we have nothing to do, so far as I can see, but to fall back upon our own principles, and to abide by them firmly. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Those principles seem to me perfectly simple; that the hand of the law must not be allowed to enter into the province of religion—(hear, hear);—that money extracted from the general taxation, whether by imperial or by local authority, cannot safely and righteously be applied to the teaching of religion, whether in church or in school; and that, in so far as the State interferes in the education of the people, it must confine itself to what it can properly do, without trespassing on any man's rights, or offending justly any man's conscience, namely, give a literary and scientific education, and leave the religious education where God has left it, to the care of the Christian Church. (Loud applause.) I am more anxious than I can express that we shall, at this great gathering, take our stand firmly and broadly on those principles. I cannot disguise from myself the fact that if we are now in a position of difficulty and embarrassment, it is partly owing to ourselves. We have wavered, hesitated, and given forth an uncertain sound; we have tried to traffic and temporise with our own consciences. I blame no one very severely for this. We were all in a new position. Our own education was in process of development. The Education Bill, in my judgment, was forced prematurely on the country. (Hear, hear.) I recognise with the utmost cordiality the high and pure motives by which those of our brethren have been actuated who in this respect we think have gone astray. They were actuated by motives which I, in many respects, cordially sympathised with. But now that experience has revealed the character of the measure that has been passed, no excuse is left. The Nonconformists are bound to fall back on and stand upon their principles. We cannot afford to give up our principles. (Hear, hear.) Our principles are the weapons with which we have conquered in past conflicts, and we shall want them again—(hear, hear)—and I would say respectfully that those who are deprecating the present agitation, who are counselling the Nonconformists to give in for the

sake of peace, of Christian charity, and of the education of the people, are like men who are offering a pleasant but narcotic draught to soldiers on guard, which, if they take it, will lull them to sleep, and the enemy will come in and spoil them of their arms. (Applause.) I would therefore say, no matter how tempting and soothing the potion that is presented to us, no matter how beautiful the cup in which it is offered, though it might be made of chaste and burnished gold, and adorned with all manner of precious stones, let us dash it from our lips and stand to our arms. (Applause.) There are some who say we are acting unfairly and unhandsomely by Mr. Forster. A more unfounded accusation it is not possible to conceive. There is no man in Parliament whom the Nonconformists have been more disposed implicitly to trust—(hear, hear)—or whom we have more implicitly trusted, than Mr. Forster. For myself, I can say honestly that there is scarcely any public man whose course I have watched with so much interest, and with so much of hope as regarded Liberal principles as Mr. Forster. The Nonconformists were proud of the success which he had achieved in Parliament and in office; and it was only gradually, painfully, slowly, and unwillingly that we were forced to admit the conviction that Mr. Forster had forgotten his old Radical and Nonconformist friends, and was betraying them, if not for the sake of conciliating the opposite party, at least for the sake of indulging his own ambition to succeed in carrying a great educational measure. (Hear.) I was reading the other day a very charming book, "Hours of Exercise in the Alps," by Professor Tyndall, and he gives an account of an excursion he made in the Urbachthal mountains in company with the present Vice-President of the Council, and there was one passage which as I read I said to myself, "Why, this is an allegory." The guide having by a great effort raised himself to a sort of snow ledge in the rock, Professor Tyndall proceeds—"I am speedily at his side, and we both tighten the rope as our friend Forster advances. With perfect courage and a faultless head, he has but one disadvantage, and that is an excess of weight of two stone. In his first attempt the snow-ledge breaks, and he falls back; but two men are now at the rope, the tension of which, aided by his

own activity, prevents him from sinking far. By a second effort he clears the difficulty, is followed by the guide, and we reach the slope above the chasm." The Nonconformists are even now willing to give Mr. Forster an opportunity of redeeming his character by a second effort to clear the difficulty. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) If, however, as some intimate, he is determined to resist all remonstrances, and to place his back against the wall and defy us, then there is nothing left for us but to gird up our loins and try a fall with the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) The Nonconformists have wrestled with and thrown stronger men than Mr. Forster. (Hear, hear.) I would remind Mr. Forster of a sentence that was once uttered by a more experienced statesman than he—Lord Russell—who, when speaking on the subject of Church-rates, said, "I know the Dissenters—(hear, hear)—they carried the Reform Bill; they carried the abolition of slavery—(hear, hear)—they carried free trade—("hear, hear," and applause)—and they will carry this question. (Renewed applause.) So I would say now, that if the Nonconformists are only earnest and united—and I have never in the whole course of my experience seen such symptoms of unity and earnestness in the Nonconformist camp as there are at present,—I dare to add to what Lord Russell said, that they will also carry the abolition or the material amendment of this Education Act. (Loud applause.)

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN moved the first resolution:—

"That in the judgment of this meeting the time has come for the Nonconformist adherents of the Liberal cause to insist on a thorough and consistent application of the principles of religious equality in the public policy of the leaders of their party."

He said: If this great meeting, including as it does representatives of the Liberal strength from every corner of the kingdom, carry this resolution with heartiness and unanimity, one of two things must happen—either the Government will be warned in time, will retrace its steps and amend its ways, or the Liberal party will be broken up and reconstructed. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, we cannot look this possible alternative in the face without a grave sense of responsibility. It is not with a light heart that we engage in such a warfare; nor can we contemplate, without keen

regret and pain, the severance of ties which have existed for generations, and the disruption of an alliance to which this country chiefly owes all that it has obtained of civil and religious liberty. If we are animated, as our opponents sometimes charitably assert, only by unworthy motives of sectarian jealousy and ignoble spite, then history will not fail to record its condemnation of our action, and the deserved failure of our policy. But if we believe that the great principles which are the bases of our political and religious life, which are the sources of our strength, the guarantees of our national freedom and welfare, are imperilled by the action of our once trusted leaders, then, I say, not any fear of consequences, nor any dread of obloquy and abuse, should prevent us from defending the interests which are intrusted to our charge, and the responsibility of the results will not rest on our heads, but upon those who are false to their professions and false to all the traditions of the party which they claim to lead and to represent, but which they are willing to sacrifice and betray. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, I see it everywhere asserted by Conservative Members of Parliament, who, curiously enough, are the only hearty supporters of the Liberal Government in this matter, that our present action is unreasonable and factious. Now, the charge is the more weighty because it comes from gentlemen who, after their exertions in opposition to the ballot and to army reform, must be admitted to be very good judges of what constitutes a really factious opposition; but, at all events, they cannot say that the Nonconformists have been prone to this sort of thing. They must admit that it is a novel phase in our history. For years we have served the Liberal party; we have been hewers of wood and drawers of water; we have been very patient under somewhat contemptuous toleration very difficult to bear; we have accepted, meanwhile, every act of justice as a favour, and every instalment of rights as a singular and almost unmerited grace. Meanwhile, too, our intercessions have always been more powerful for others than for ourselves. Represented as animated only by sectarian and selfish motives, our main achievements are the relief of Jews from their disabilities, and the enforcement of the claims of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects to equal rights and justice. (Applause.) We have always advocated every measure of social

improvement, every concession of popular rights, every removal of class distinctions, and the cause of liberty and freedom throughout the world; and we have postponed our special claims to consideration whenever the assertion of them appeared likely to hinder or delay an act of justice to our fellow-citizens, or a measure which would contribute to their happiness. So long as progress was sure, however slow it might be; so long as the faces of our leaders were turned towards the goal, however hesitating might be their advance, however poor might be their zeal,—we loyally sustained them, and we patiently waited their pleasure or their convenience for the full fruition of our hopes. (Applause.) But now, when we might fairly expect an accelerated speed, when we might justly demand a larger share of attention and relief, suddenly the Liberal party falters, and the Liberal leaders hesitate; and, under the guidance of a man who boasts of his Puritan ancestors, while he is indifferent to their principles and to their cause, we see ourselves drifting back into the darkness when we thought we were emerging into the light of perfect day. (Applause.) Concessions which are made to threats of Irish disaffection, which are wrung from the Government by the terrors of a priesthood, which takes its inspiration from a foreign source, are curtly refused to Nonconformist loyalty. While Conservative support is angled for, and clerical opposition is bribed into silence with a great price, we are told to take our support elsewhere by the leader of a Ministry that we contributed mainly to bring into power. (Applause.) I say, then, that these are the justifications of the Nonconformist rebellion. (Laughter and applause.) Slowly we might be content to move, providing that all progress was an advance; gradually we might have been willing to obtain our just rights, provided that we always neared their attainment; but to go backward we absolutely refuse, and Dissenters, I believe, will be induced by no consideration of party loyalty or party ties, to be false to the trusts which are imposed upon them, to the interests and principles which they are to defend. This meeting and the conference which will open to-morrow is the answer to Mr. Gladstone's challenge—(applause)—a challenge very likely uttered in haste, and perhaps more likely repented of at leisure. But we are not such degenerate descendants

of our ancestors; we are not yet so low in courage or so poor in spirit, as to refuse the test of our sincerity which we have been so ungraciously challenged to produce. Our policy is determined for us, our line and our duties are marked out; we were told that we were to convert the opinion of the nation to our view—or rather, as I would put it, that we were to make manifest the existing opinion of the majority of the nation—before the Liberal leaders will think it worth while to pronounce upon matters of the highest religious and political importance, or to announce any definite policy upon questions which are raised in the name of equality and justice by the most earnest and most consistent of their adherents. We might have supposed in our simplicity that it was the province of leaders to lead their armies to victory. (Hear, hear.) We are disappointed to find that we have to drag our commanding officers into action. (Applause.) We might have thought that great principles would be naturally and necessarily applied; we find that we have to teach Liberal members that practice is better than profession, and that, as the copy-books told us, "application is better than precept." I have heard of the reply of a child which gives me a rather happy illustration of the state to which we are reduced. She was presented with a toy horse, but, unfortunately, one wheel of the machine was broken, and when she was asked how the animal went, she said, "Oh, it goes very well if you push it very hard, and so long as you push it." (Laughter.) This is the condition to which the Liberal party is now reduced—(loud applause)—under the leadership of men whom we had delighted to honour—it will only move if we push it very hard, and it will only keep in motion so long as we continue our pushing. Well, now we have to ask ourselves what is to be the nature of the pressure which we are going to apply. I suppose, sir, that it is not consistent with the pacific habits of Nonconformists to make a demonstration upon Mr. Forster's windows, or to pull down any park railings — (hear, hear),— although we have been told that both those exhibitions have been very marvellous stimulants to our modern statesmanship. But we are met here to advocate no intemperance of word or action—(hear, hear);—on the contrary, the policy of this, as of another great alliance which has its centre in this town, is one of total abstinence.

The Nonconformists must withdraw their support at elections from Liberals until they have learned the Liberal alphabet, and can spell out the first words of the Liberal creed. (Applause.) Our opponents have set us an example of union and organisation. The parson and the publican have joined hands at Plymouth, and again in the West Riding. (Hear, hear.) Everywhere the Roman Catholics and Churchmen embrace; the lion lies down with the lamb in order to secure from school boards support to denominational education. The so-called National Church is fast becoming one vast political organisation for maintaining the supremacy of a sect. The so-called national schools, built in part with our money, mainly supported with the funds derived from the National purse, are everywhere used as committee-rooms at elections, everywhere centres for the support of a power which has hitherto been prominent in its resistance to popular reform. We cannot win by these means, nor with such allies; but we may sink our individual differences, we may unite as one man to remove the last vestige of ecclesiastical supremacy. And in our struggle for this object, and to secure religious equality, I believe that we shall have the support of the great masses of the people, who are always in favour of a policy of liberty and justice. Now the experience of the past few months has not been without its encouragement. Already there is a very marked change in the utterances both in the press and on the platform since it became known that Nonconformists were determined to maintain and to assert their rights. No one talks gaily now of cantering over the religious difficulty—(hear, hear)—that celebrated euphemism, by which the Vice-President of the Council expressed his intention of overriding the claims and the consciences of the Dissenters. You, sir, have referred to the utterances of the *Times* newspaper, utterances as contradictory as they are clever; but the latest utterances of that paper have been on our side. It no longer sees that our action is simply unreasonable and mutinous. on the contrary, it only pleads now for patience, for moderation, We are not to retreat or desist, but simply not to force the pace, and reduce progress to deadlock and confusion. Now, sir, that plaintive appeal comes rather late in the day. It only proves that the writer of the article is acquainted with a very old and classic fable. The cock once roosted on a perch above the horses,

and so long as he was safe there he crowed very lustily, and he taunted his companions with the inferiority of their position. But when the perch broke, and he tumbled under their feet, as soon as he had lifted himself up he addressed them gravely, and he said: "For goodness' sake, gentlemen, let us be very careful, lest we tread on one another's toes." (Laughter.) Now there is one great advantage in the position which we have taken up—that is that we are all beginning to see clearly the principles which are behind our agitation; that we are beginning to get a clearer insight into the questions which are involved, and a better idea of our duties in respect to them. This payment, for instance, of fees to denominational schools, this grievance which has roused the country, is in itself comparatively a small matter; but the principle, of which it is a violation, is a great matter. (Applause.) We have been taunted by our opponents, and not altogether without reason, with inconsistency at straining at this gnat while we have been so long swallowing the camel of immense resources voted to sectarian purposes. But I venture to hope that this inconsistency is fast disappearing. At all events, the position is not altogether without precedents, which may throw some light upon our better policy. I was reading the other day in that eloquent "History of the Netherlands," written by the late United States minister, how Philip the Second, when he introduced the Spanish Inquisition into that country, was astonished at the outbreak which his proposal excited. He was aware that the institution, in a somewhat different form, had existed for fifty years; it had destroyed the lives of tens of thousands of persons, and therefore, as his counsellors said, and as he agreed, it had worked very well; and he was astonished that the people should object to this slight and formal addition to their sufferings. But when the insurrection came at last, not only the Spanish Inquisition, but the whole vile fabric of bigotry and superstition and persecution perished with it. And so we say, if I may compare small things with great, this payment of fees is the last straw which has roused us to throw off the whole burden—(applause)—but once roused to this position we shall not rest until every vestige of ecclesiastical supremacy has been swept away, and complete religious equality has been secured for every section of the community. (Applause.) In claiming this although Non-

conformists, we are not claiming our own Nonconformist interests only. Special privileges in ecclesiastical matters have their counterpart in political monopolies and social class distinctions; they react injuriously on all progress and reform; they cramp the energies of those they are intended to bless, and they make them narrow and deprive them of popular sympathies. (Applause.) The Bishop of Manchester, whose outspoken utterances we admire, even when we most differ from him—(applause)—told us the other day that the clergy were like other men, actuated with similar motives, and with the same feelings, and the same virtues. I willingly believe it, and when, therefore, I see them as a body always opposed to the popular side, always on the side of property and privilege, I say the fault cannot be in the men, it must be in the system. (Applause.) If they resisted those reforms to which you alluded in your quotation from Earl Russell, if they were opposed to the abolition of the Corn Laws, if they always took the side of the landowner, if they favoured the case of the Southern slaveowner, and if they were opposed to reform and to the extension of the suffrage, while their brethren of other denominations were always forward in the cause of liberty and freedom at home and abroad, I say the difference must not be sought in differences of religion, or in human nature; it must be sought, and will be found, in that peculiar institution which renders the clergy of our Established Church out of tune and out of harmony with the aspirations of a free people. (Applause.) It is not their religious work that we wish to subvert, nor is it their spiritual life that we would destroy; but we attack their political power, which has always been used against the interests of the majority of the nation; and I, for my part, cannot believe that the people of this country will continue to surrender great resources for the support of a system which makes great men opponents of freedom, which makes good men enemies of the people's rights. (Applause.) In striving to remove distinctions which have acted so injuriously, we have the welfare of the nation for our first object; and if I might be permitted to quote from a poet who never wrote any questionable books—(laughter)—I would remind you—

> "That they who fight for freedom undertake
> The noblest work mankind can have at stake:
> Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
> A blessing, freedom is the pledge of all."

Ours, then, is no mere fight between the Dissenters on the one hand and a rival Church upon the other; ours is the cause of the nation against sectarianism, the cause of the people against the priests. (Hear, hear.) These may enjoy yet a little longer whatever support a Liberal Government may give them; but the hands are moving swiftly round the dial, and the knell of priestly domination and sectarian statesmanship has already begun to ring. Our path is mapped out before us, the consummation of our hopes is within our grasp, if we will only lay our hands to the work, and neither shrink nor falter till it is well and wisely and thoroughly accomplished. (Loud applause.)

The Rev. ALEXANDER HANNAY: I second the resolution which is before the meeting with pleasure, though, like Mr. Chamberlain, I am not able to say that I second it with a light heart. The resolution points to a conflict into which Nonconformists are being dragged, I was going to say, with the Liberal party; but it is not so—it is a conflict with the chiefs of the Liberal party. And if I say that I second the resolution, or take any part, however humble, in such a conflict otherwise than with a light heart, it is not that I have any misgiving as to the ultimate result of such a conflict The Nonconformists will win. (Cheers.) This I say, not as a boast of the electoral strength of Nonconformity, though I have observed that similar expressions of confidence uttered elsewhere have been so interpreted by the oracles of the press, as if it were meant to be said that Nonconformists constituted so active and influential a portion of the Liberal party in all parts of the land that practically they were able to dictate terms to its leaders. Sir, the bearing of Nonconformists towards the leaders of the Liberal party has at no time been dictatorial. The genius of their political life makes it impossible for them to assume a dictatorial attitude. Their political action is for the most part the outcome of principles which have in the first instance another and a far higher bearing. I shall not be misunderstood in an assembly like this when I say that the political life of Nonconformists is but a phase of their religious life. Besides, they have never had anything to ask for themselves from the State, which is, I suspect, the common inspiration of the dictatorial temper in political life. It is quite true they have had their grievances, and against these they have

not been so unmanly as not to protest; but when did they ask that any projected reform touching the civil rights or the social condition of the people as a whole should be postponed until they should be placed on an equality in the eye of the law with their fellow-citizens of the State Church? When did they make their service in any great campaign of the Liberal party to depend on their acknowledged grievances being in the first place abolished? There is no such blot on their history. It must be acknowledged that they have always belonged to that portion of the Liberal party, as has been hinted to-night, which has had to educate and to lead, and especially when the party was in power, to drag on the rest; but they have never once, in any strict sense of the term, formed a section of the Liberal party, standing within their own lines, with their own distinctive watchwords, selling their political influence for considerations, which they supposed to be favourable to Nonconformity. Throughout the history of the Liberal party, they have been known simply as Liberals of the Liberals, and not as Nonconformists. And, sir, without anticipating any discussions which may take place before we leave Manchester, on a question of organising Nonconformists for political ends, I must profess my personal unwillingness to depart from the position which I have understood Nonconformists always to occupy, as working heart and soul with the Liberal party as a whole. (Hear, hear.) If, for passing ends, we must come together thus to secure that no great injustice is done us, I yet hope that we shall not be driven by any tremendous necessity to anything like the permanent organisation of Nonconformity for political ends. Our confidence that we shall succeed in this struggle has nothing to do with our power to dictate terms; it has to do with the consciousness we have that in taking the stand we now take as Nonconformists we are not seeking to promote the interests of Nonconformity, nor of anything that is narrow, or sectional, or sectarian, but that we are acting in the interests of a free and united national life. We are not courting any triumph for the religious communities which rank under the common name of Nonconformity, whether over the present Government, or over the Church as established by law. We are simply attempting to protect the people from a policy which tends to perpetuate invidious dis-

tinctions among them. We have deplored as Nonconformists the divisions which have taken place throughout the land on account of the State's meddling with spiritual things; and we do protest against those divisions, or against any division which depends on religious feeling, being adopted as the lines on which the Legislature shall build, in any great question of national policy such as the education of the people. We can say with a good conscience that our contention is for the commonwealth, and not for Nonconformity. Hence our confidence, for we know that in this the spirit of modern legislation is with us. We know that in this all the higher political thought of the day is with us. We know that in this, wherever our leaders may be found, the great body of the Liberal party is with us. It is quite true that trimming politicians, timid politicians, politicians who have allowed themselves to be earwigged by certain political busybodies who are constantly setting themselves forward as representative men, may for a time seem to give a different course to political events; but I undertake to say that the leaven which is working more and more in the political life of England, the leaven of fairness as between man and man, as between class and class, and creed and creed, the leaven of righteousness, the leaven of the sentiment of nationality, will baffle these conspirators against the unity and the progress of English national life. Hence, I say, our confidence. It may be said that we have given good reason for the confidence. But why then not go into the conflict with a light heart? The *Times* newspaper was exceedingly puzzled with the tone of Mr. Miall's speeches at Newcastle; it could not understand how, with the confidence Mr. Miall expresses as to the result of his work, he should not be the gayest of all gay men. It observed that he was a pensive man, if not sorrowful. Sir, we have no difficulty in understanding the honourable gentleman's mood. (Hear, hear.) We know something of it in our own breasts. Our confidence with regard to the issues of this conflict is tempered by our dislike of the probable incidents of the conflict. Some of these we earnestly deprecate, some of them we would do the utmost we might do to avert consistently with a good conscience. There is, I suppose, no man on this platform who would be forward to take the great Master's words to himself, and apply them strictly to

any state of feeling of which he may be conscious; but there are some of us, in this as in other struggles, who are able to understand something of the feeling of Him who came to give peace to this troubled world, when He looked on the incidents of the conflict and said, "I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword." There are incidents in this conflict which are painful exceedingly to us. One of these, which seems to be imminent, has been referred to again and again to-night; I refer to the alienation of Nonconformists from the present Government. Sir, those who taunt us, as we are daily being taunted, with caprice and intolerance of feeling towards the present Government, can very little understand the painful complication of feeling, the all but intolerable sense of responsibility with which we find ourselves, not—thank God!—as yet in open rupture with Mr. Gladstone's Government, but in relations of relaxed confidence. I may say this much about the temper of every man in this assembly: our relations to the present Ministry are relations of relaxed confidence. (Hear, hear.) We have regarded Mr. Gladstone with an admiration and affection which are perhaps without parallel in political history; nor can we ever forget or cease to prize as among the noblest fruits of English statesmanship the great services Mr. Gladstone has rendered to the State—(cheers)—not only by the measures of reform which he has carried through the House of Commons, nor, so far as I am concerned, chiefly by that; I should rather say by the tone of moral earnestness and religious faith which he has brought into English political life. But we have to do not with William Ewart Gladstone, but with his administration; we have to do with the policy of the administration; we have to do specifically with its policy in the Elementary Education Act, and other movements in reference to education. That policy touches our great principles as Nonconformists. And here I may be allowed, I suppose, to speak plainly. While one would make allowance for the difficulties in which the Government was placed in framing an Education Bill—while one would even make special allowance in consideration of the unaccountable unsteadiness of the Nonconformist ranks at the time when this question first began to be discussed, one cannot, after all, hesitate to say that the policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government in relation

to the education of the people has been cruelly and stupidly wrong. (Cheers.) Why, at the very first the friends of religious equality, the friends of free education for the people—free from the taint of priestcraft and from the narrowness of religious denominationalism, were thrown off their guard by the announcement that the Government intended to introduce a national system, and by the committal of that system into the hands of a gentleman whose antecedents and reputation seemed guarantee enough that the great maxims of the Liberal party, and especially those that concerned religious equality, would be respected. How has this guarantee been kept? A Bill was introduced, as you know, whose least defect was that it was characterised by certain specious but pernicious novelties—novelties to English legislation—by which it relegated imperial questions to local committees, by which it clubbed electors, according to their denominations, under the *batons* of their priests and pastors; a Bill which, pretending to be national, became denominational, and practically handed the education of the young of this country over to the religious denominations, or to those among them who were prepared to enter on the ignoble struggle for it to which the Government invited them; and this Bill was carried, was forced through the House of Commons in spite of the protests of the friends of religious equality; in spite of the opposition of the representatives of the great constituencies, in spite of the opposition of the Liberal party, by the most unnatural and impolitic coalition perhaps which the present generation has seen. Mr. William Edward Forster embraced Mr. Gathorne Hardy over the table of the House, and, uniting their forces, Mr. Forster's ambition was fulfilled—to write his name on a great education measure for England. Fulfilled—but at what a price! Some said it looked like treachery. I do not like hard words, but I know not how to account for Mr. Forster's action otherwise, unless the plea be admitted, which may perhaps be admitted in political as it is in personal suicide—the plea of temporary insanity. It has been said that the Government has made a mistake, and that all Governments make mistakes, and that it does not become us to bear hard upon the Government, that we should be patient in our dealing with it, that we should give it space for repentance, and

so forth. Now I should be the last to deny to any Government, as to any individual, a place for repentance; but where is the evidence that Mr. Gladstone's Government is seeking it? It is true, we have had some vague assurances with regard to the intentions of the Government in the matter of Irish education. But, in the first place, we have been misled by vague assurances once, and we must be on our guard not to be misled once again. (Hear, hear.) In the second place I do not see that these vague assurances amount to much; they simply seem to say that the Government, in the present temper of the people, are not prepared to deal with the Irish difficulty at all. Postpone it! No guarantee in this for the future. If it be said there is a determination on their part not to found a system of elementary education in Ireland, or any system of education there on a denominational basis, I confess that I am quite unable to understand why I should be asked to rejoice at that, or why I should be asked to restore to the Government my shaken confidence on that account. It simply amounts to this, that they are prepared to treat the question of national education in Ireland on different principles, to rest it on a different basis from that on which they have treated it in England. I protest, in the name of the sister country, they have no right to do this. Herein lies the infatuation of the Government, that by pressing this matter of denominational education in England they are making Cardinal Cullen master of the situation in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) He said but a few days ago that he knew he had the sympathy of candid men of all parties in Great Britain. Sir, I do not hesitate to say that if we fail to beat the Government in its attempt to hand over the education of England and Scotland to the denominations, Cardinal Cullen has a right to the sympathy of all candid men. We heard but as yesterday from the Lord Advocate of Scotland that he is prepared to introduce a bill for that unhappy portion of Her Majesty's dominions from which I come myself. What is that Bill? It is the old Bill of 1869, more nakedly and shamelessly denominational than Mr. Forster's Bill, 1870. Mr. Forster made a great effort to push that Bill through in 1869. We understand the reason now—it was to prepare the way for the English Elementary Act of 1870. I do not hesitate to say, whatever our

feelings of respect for Mr. Gladstone or his Government may be, that if the Lord Advocate of Scotland shall imitate Mr. Forster's tactics and carry through the Scotch Education Bill by the help of Tory votes, the alienation of the Nonconformists of England from Mr. Gladstone's Government will be complete and final. (Loud cheers.) I wonder what the Voluntaries of Scotland are about! (Hear, hear.) I got my first ideas of political and religious liberty as a boy from the Scotch voluntary controversy. I can understand how the Kirk of Scotland should make a stand for what they call "use and wont," that is the grinding and whipping into every Scotch child of that remarkable theological instrument called the Shorter Catechism. I can understand how the less advanced members of the Free Church of Scotland should do so; but where are the United Presbyterians—the Voluntaries of the Voluntaries? It is whispered that a union is about to take place between the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church. Now I am not so unreasonable, I hope, as to expect lovers to act like other people—(laughter);—but I am sure that the better judgment of the United Presbyterians themselves will sanction at least this moderate statement, that they may buy that union at too great a price. (Hear, hear.) Our course as Nonconformists is perfectly clear. We will stand to our principles, and if the Government deserts us the Government must lay its account for our abandonment of it. I know there are some who speak rather lightly about the breaking up of the Liberal party. They say, "We will get Liberal measures from a Tory Government;" and certainly no Tory Government would have passed so Conservative a measure as the Elementary Education Act. But I do not want Liberal measures from a Tory Government. I do not know that we have a more scandalous passage in our English political life than the passing of the last Reform Bill by the crafty and accommodating politician who then, as if by some cynical fate, had been raised to the supreme office in the State. I have no wish that we should be placed in such circumstances again. "Have a care then not to break up the Liberal party," it is said. Why, the Government gives us only a choice of evils; to have Mr. Disraeli in power passing Liberal measures by the help of the non-official members of the Liberal party, or to

have Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Forster in power passing Conservative measures, by the help of Tory squires—(hear, hear)—and if this be the practical dilemma there can be no question as to which side of it we shall choose. Both are offensive to us and discreditable to us as a nation; there is an element of immorality underlying both which is especially offensive to us as religious men. But I say, if it comes to this issue, we shall accept the Liberal measures, never taking any active or positive part to put Conservatives into power—that we cannot do—but neither can we support Liberals who are untrue to their principles. We shall accept the Liberal measures from the Tory Government, and let the Government who gives us the Liberal measures settle its account with its own party as it can. Then, if the Liberal party is broken up at this crisis, I ask who is to blame—that section of the party which keeps by the Liberal standards, or that section that has abandoned them? (Cheers.) If Mr. Forster, moved by some ambition or some hallucination, has cantered away from the Liberal flag, carrying with him Whig placemen, carrying with him those members of the Liberal party who never know where they are except when they see their leaders—if he has cantered away, and ridden right over to "our friend the enemy"—(laughter)—while others have remained true to their colours, I ask who is to blame for the breaking up of the party? (Loud cheers.) Is it not Mr. Forster and his cantering fugitives? I never heard, when panic or flight overtook a regiment in the hour of battle, that the small section that kept by the colours was blamed for the regiment being broken. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster ought to have thought how serious a matter it is to break up the Liberal party, when they carried a troop of Tory squires into the lobby against Mr. Jacob Bright's amendment—(hear, hear)—and handed over the education of the country to the denominationalists. I have no doubt they are laying this seriously to heart now. I do not know that they are taking great comfort to themselves from that famous speech of Lord Derby's delivered in this county a short time ago. If I understood that speech it was to say, on Lord Derby's part, representing the Conservatives, that they are quite ready to play over again with Mr. Forster the old game of 1870—that that is their understanding of the work their party have to do—to pro-

tect Mr. Gladstone against the extreme men of his own party. A beautiful arrangement! They are like children sitting in the market-place; only the proverbial case is reversed, for Mr. Forster pipes and Lord Derby dances. (Much laughter.) I do not know that when Mr. Forster comes to mourn, as mourn he will, Lord Derby will be so ready to lament. (Laughter.) Let this be understood, in any event, that the Nonconformists of England are prepared to acknowledge the obligations of loyalty to no statesmen who are not themselves loyal to Liberal principles. (Cheers.) Religious equality must now be held to be the cardinal principle of the Liberal party, or that party is nothing. (Cheers.) I do not believe there is a Nonconformist in England who desires to insist on that principle being applied, as our American neighbours would say, "now and square" to existing institutions. No one would go to Mr. Gladstone and say, "If you are not prepared to introduce a Bill into the House of Commons for disestablishing the Church of England and Ireland, then I will withdraw my confidence from you." We accept Mr. Gladstone's challenge to convert the country in perfect good faith, howsoever it may have been made. We have the faith and patience of our principles; and we are prepared to postpone the demand that the churches shall be disestablished until we can clearly and unmistakably make it in the name of a decided majority of the English people. (Cheers.) But in the meantime, and with regard to all legislation, from this hour we demand the adoption of the principle of absolute religious equality; that there shall be no element introduced into our legislation that shall recognise the existence of a favoured sect, and that that legislation shall not be in any wise coloured or warped by the fact that there is an Established Church. Yesterday we asked for toleration, to-day we ask for religious equality; to-morrow we shall demand the disestablishment of the Church of England. (Loud cheers.) But let this be clearly understood; we do not ask any pledge for to-morrow. Sufficient unto the day are the labour and the triumph thereof. It is for to-day that we demand a hearty and honest recognition of the principle of religious equality, and we say that if our present leaders are not prepared for this we must find others. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P. (who was received with loud applause), said: Whenever we have what we consider successful meetings in this hall, I always find that, not only are the seats occupied, but that every square foot of floor is crowded by standing men and women. To-night this has been the case to a remarkable degree. We usually meet here only our neighbours, but I am happy to know that this meeting has something of a representative character. There are present many hundreds of persons from distant parts of England and Wales, and I have no doubt there are hundreds of men here who have never before stood upon what I may fairly call historic ground within these walls. (Hear.) We are met as an assembly of persons with many differences of religious belief, and probably we should differ also considerably in our views of the details of an education scheme; but we are nevertheless bound together by the ties of a common principle. I believe there is a unanimous feeling amongst us that in the United Kingdom every man as regards religion should be equal before the law—(hear)—and that if it be the duty of the Government, as I believe it is, to give elementary instruction to the children of the people, that instruction should be confined to teaching in which the whole people agree. (Hear.) With your permission I will make a few observations with regard to the Education Act of 1870, and will point out some of the things which I think are good, and which reflect credit upon the Administration which passed the Act, and I will also refer to some things which I think are unfortunate, and which ought to be removed or amended. I believe that the best part of the Education Act, that which is worth all the rest put together, is the power which is given to local authorities to compel the attendance of children at school. (Hear.) I would abandon every clause of the Act before I would abandon that. I will give a simple illustration of its meaning. The other day the report of the Stockport School Board was sent to me, and I found that, though the board had been no longer at work than many other boards, yet the increased attendance had, with little trouble or active coercion, increased to 36 per cent actually, and 26 per cent on the average. (Hear, hear.) This increased attendance at Stockport and elsewhere proves that the compulsory difficulty is solved. I hold compulsory attendance to be

so necessary that I wish to see it made an absolute law throughout the entire kingdom. There is another matter (which some may consider a small one) for which I gave the Government the credit which is due to it—the inspectors of schools are now limited in their services to the secular teaching. (Hear, hear.) I hold that to be a great gain; it is one step which the Government has taken towards putting itself in a proper position. Why, until that occurred, a secular school, though it might have been the best in the kingdom, had no right to the education grant; it had to resort to some subterfuge or other, perhaps of introducing a few verses from the Scriptures, in order to obtain it. Happily this is at an end. I am glad too that sectarian inspection is gone, and that no religious body, however powerful, can now go to the Government and say, "No inspector shall enter this school unless he be of our faith." Now the same inspector can enter any school, and it is likely that the reports of the inspectors will, in consequence, be received with greater respect than hitherto. There is another change which has not been received with much thankfulness, but which I think was a change in the right direction—I mean the application of the time-table conscience clause to all denominational schools. It was not possible before for any man to send his child to a Church or Catholic school (if there happened to be no other convenient school) without that child being taught, as much as it was possible, to be an Anglican or a Catholic. I am glad that that change has been made. Some said it was of little value—(hear)—that pressure might be exerted upon children—("It is")—that they might be subjected to unfair, to disgraceful influences. (Hear.) I have no doubt whatever that that might be so, and I believe it is the case. (Hear, hear.) But those who do it break the law—(hear)—they are acting against not only the spirit, but the letter of the law. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, small as the advantage may be, it is an advantage, and I am glad we have got it. Now the most objectionable part of the Bill to my mind is the mode of electing the boards. The cumulative vote, that plan by which in this city one person may pile up fifteen votes, and give them all to one candidate, seems to me to be carrying the principle of the representation of minorities to the highest pitch of

absurdity. (Hear, hear.) Under that system any sect among Dissenters, any sect within the Church, any clique, no matter where or of what sort, may be stimulated to put forth a candidate, in the hope that he may get upon the board. The boards therefore may, and in some cases do, become a concentration of the sectarianism of the constituencies from which they spring; they have all the sectarianism of the sects without those better qualities which give vitality and power to sects. I verily believe that if Parliament had done its utmost to contrive a plan by which it should bring School Boards into contempt, it could not have been more successful whatever it had done. Take a man—and there are many such—who lives outside the fog of theological partisanship, a man who habitually breathes a larger and a purer atmosphere, a man who endeavours to do general good to the general community, who never asks the question, "What is a man's creed?" or, "Where his temple?"—let such a man try to get upon the School Board. He may do it by something like an accident, but if he shall do it he will generally scramble in at the bottom of the poll. Again, I am not much in favour of the School Board being elected for three years. There is no other representative body in this country that has such an advantage or disadvantage. In our municipalities, as you know, we contest the opinion of the public every year, and in spite of the Septennial Act Parliament may be dissolved at any time. I confess when I had looked at the conduct of some boards in this country, some of them even near this place—(hear, hear)—I have had a strong desire that we might have another trial at an election to see whether we could not have fewer obstructives there. I have been told by some that if we had not the cumulative vote we should have more obstructives. Well, if it comes by an honest election, I can submit to it. I have been in a minority many a time, I am in the minority now with regard to many questions, and it is my duty as one of that minority to endeavour so to convince my countrymen that they will accept the views which I entertain. Precisely so it will be with your School Boards if by a fair majority we were beaten at the poll. Now, I would remove the 25th clause altogether. (Hear, hear.) I do not like the arguments by which it is defended. Let us look at them for a moment. We are told in

the first place that the parents of indigent children should have a choice with regard to the schools where their fees are paid, and in the second place that there are very few Board schools, and that it is therefore quite impossible to be allowed only to remit fees in those schools. Well, with regard to choice, it is all very well to tell us that parents may choose in places where there is a variety of schools, but in those districts where there is a Church school, and where there are Dissenters, and where there are Roman Catholic labourers, what would be the choice of those men? It would be the choice commonly known as Hobson's choice. And supposing that in Manchester a certain denominational school was crowded, where is to be the choice of the indigent parent who wishes to select that school? Why should not there be Board schools everywhere where Boards are established? Why, on the very principle that parents should have some choice, there ought to be School Boards established. On the argument of Mr. Forster it seems to me that Board schools ought generally to exist. I would say one word upon the question of what instruction should be given in Board schools, and it appears to me that if this is to be a real agitation we ought at least to stand on solid ground, to have an unassailable position. Well, we cannot have it short of taking our stand upon what is commonly called secular teaching. (Applause.) I can say to the League what was said to me in the House of Commons when I brought forward the amendment to which so much reference has been made. I was told that it had no principle in it, that nobody could understand it. (Laughter.) There was a good deal of truth in that. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) What is called unsectarian education might be and probably is as offensive to the Roman Catholics, to the Jews, and to other classes of persons, as is the teaching of the catechism to those who are assembled in this room. (Hear, hear.) If you begin an agitation of this kind, you must begin by doing justice to everybody, and you cannot do that if you stop short at a plan which simply admits yourselves and shuts out a great many other persons. (Hear, hear.) You have been afraid probably of the cry, "Do you want in an Act of Parliament a clause excluding the Bible from English schools?" No, I do not want a clause excluding the Bible from English schools—(hear, hear)—but it has been

made necessary by Act of Parliament that the servants of the Government, the school inspectors, shall confine themselves to the secular teaching of the scholars—(cheers)—and I would make it imperative, by Act of Parliament, that the servants of the rate-payers, the Board school teachers, should also confine themselves to secular teaching. Government has only to go one short step further to get to the point which would satisfy us. I would not exclude the Bible from the schools. Let an Act of Parliament give the Board authority to arrange with the ministers, or with anybody else who wishes to teach religion during the religious hour, and I think we might be free from the taunt that we do anything to discredit the Bible. In conclusion, I will simply express what to me is a great satisfaction, and it is this, that the education question has now taken a foremost rank among the political problems of our day. I believe that the battle has been half won. We have been fighting some of us for a generation or two. I believe we have made great progress. A good deal has yet to be done. When I look at a splendid meeting like this, I feel that there is power enough in the country to do the work, and to do it in a satisfactory manner. What we want is that there shall be schools everywhere, which are fair to the children and just to the public. Above all things, whatever our differences may be, let us resolve, one and all, that the people shall be educated; for whatever influences we can bring to bear to diminish the neglect, the suffering, and the crime by which we are too much surrounded, one of the main influences must undoubtedly be the early and favourable discipline of the mind. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. LANDELS said: I have pleasure in supporting the resolution which has already been so ably moved, seconded, and supported by previous speakers. I feel with them the gravity of the occasion. We cannot forget after all that is said what the present Government has done—(hear, hear)—and I, for one, cannot look lightly on any measure which may possibly tend to its overthrow. With all its shortcomings I believe it to be one of the best governments that England ever had. The gentleman at its head, ever since I have had an opportunity of watching his course, has commanded my profound admiration. (Hear, hear.) It is not often that we find a man of such great statesmanlike

intellect combined with such earnestness of purpose and such lofty moral sentiment, and I believe it to be a blessing for which it behoves us to be thankful to a beneficent Providence that such a man has been raised up to deal in his high conscientious manner with our national affairs, and to administer the Government of this great empire. (Applause.) I should therefore deem the overthrow of his Government—although perhaps he has not given it so much of his own impress as he should—as a national calamity not lightly to be incurred. But, sir, while I would deprecate that, there are some things after all which are more sacred than the existence of governments or the intactness of political parties, and among these are the great principles which we have derived from the teaching of the New Testament, and by the maintenance of which we justify our existence as the Nonconformists of Great Britain. It is not quite evident to me, indeed, that the course proposed in this resolution must necessarily lead to the consequences which we dread. A friend of mine said to me the other day "I fear you will drive Mr. Gladstone away, as you have driven Mr. Forster." How far that process has taken place in the case of the latter gentleman I am not prepared to say, I have a fancy that he is not very much further now than he was at the commencement of his course as Vice-President of the Council; and as to Mr. Gladstone, although he sometimes treats Nonconformists with something like contempt—in the case, for example, of a very distinguished leader in the House of Commons, showing, I fancy, that something of the scorn fostered by his early education and associations cleaves to him still—yet I do not believe, the very regardlessness of results which he showed in that instance prevents my believing, that he is the man to abandon a cause because of the treatment that he receives from any party whatsoever; and if he were so, it would only be the easier for us to say, what unquestionably we ought to say, that right and truth are in our estimation more valuable than even the countenance and support of William Ewart Gladstone. We are not however, as you have heard, about to press so hard on the Government that this result must follow. We do not ask them at present to deal with that venerable system of injustice which has so many sympathies, and so many sentiments and interests enlisted in its

support. We are content to wait until the English people shall be so educated that a shrewd statesman may regard its removal as a practical though difficult measure of statesmanship. But the Government and the country alike ought to be told that there is one thing which we will not and cannot do, and that is consent to any government which receives our support becoming the tool of a party for the perpetration of a new injustice. The resolution says—that in the opinion of this meeting the time has come. I am inclined to think that the time had come more than two years ago. I cannot but feel that, had we taken the course then which we purpose to take now, we might not have found ourselves in the mess in which we are on the great education question. I cannot altogether blame the Government; I take part of the blame to ourselves for the fix into which we have been brought by the objectionable clauses of the Education Bill. I would not, of course, find fault with any one, but I think we should have taken at the beginning the position which we are taking now—should have told the Government plainly and unmistakably that we cannot degrade religion by making it the functionary of the State, nor violate Chistianity's fundamental law by taking the money of Infidels and Jews and others to pay for a religion which they do not approve. I think we have been afraid of a shadow or of a cry. Because secular education has been pronounced a godless education, many who believe in the thing, so far as the State is concerned, have been afraid to pronounce the word. We have thus lost a glorious opportunity of giving free and distinct and commanding utterance to our great principles; we have attempted a well-meaning but unworthy compromise. There has been a holocaust of principle in some directions, and the result is the present mess which we all deplore. Of course we do not believe in secular education as sufficient, we would have men receive an education which shall enable them so to perform the duties of time that when done with these they may rise to the enjoyment of God's eternity. Mere intellectual culture will never do that you may combine the intellect of a Newton with the passion of a Nero, but the intellect will not subdue the passion; the passion will be more likely to press the intellect into its service, and as the result of the combination you will have not a philosopher of

such commanding force of character as the strong passions of the monarch might lead you to suppose, but a kind of moral monster it may be, in which brute and fiend are nearly equal. In order to prevent this religious instruction is indispensable, and we attach so much importance to it that we are concerned that it should not be placed in incompetent hands. It is not the province of the State to impart religious education, nor is the functionary whom the State appoints as schoolmaster the man to whom we should entrust such a sacred work. Our motto ought to be this, "Secular education by the State, and religious education by the Church." (Applause.) The programme of the National Education League, as presented in their resolutions of last week, seems to be almost all that one could desire. (Hear, hear.) Had it only been their programme from the beginning we should have found ourselves in a very different position now. Perhaps there is one thing which it wants—that equitable compensation shall be made for the schools that are handed over by the denominations voluntarily for secular uses. When that is done I do not think the clerical party can fairly demand more. I do not think you will satisfy them by that. I question if anything you could do or propose would ever satisfy them; but yet the obvious justice of such a measure will, I believe, rouse a larger amount of the feeling of the nation in your favour, for the just is always strong, and a bold and sweeping measure like this will, I believe, be found at once the easiest, and the safest, and the best. Perhaps the Government, in the state of parties, will fail to carry such a measure. A friend of mine expressed his belief that if the Government were to make the attempt its existence would not be worth many days' purchase. If it be so it might be worth the Government's while to stake its existence on the issue. To fall in such a cause would be to fall gloriously; it would be to sacrifice itself for a principle which its successors, as in the case of the Reform Bill, will be compelled to take up and carry. And it may be that the Government had better contemplate this, than face the only other alternative; better to sacrifice itself for a principle, than to court the ignominious defeat which seems all but certain should it continue to pursue its present course. There is a rock ahead, as every one can see; and if the Government continues to sail

on the denominational tack, on that rock it is almost sure to founder. The Scotch bill to be introduced this session will very likely be passed, but the Bill for Ireland must follow; and the Scotch people are too Protestant ever to consent to the endowment of Roman Catholicism through its schools, by the introduction of the denominational principle there. During a recent and somewhat extended tour in Scotland, when I had opportunity of conversing with ministers of nearly all denominations, I heard free opinion very unequivocally expressed, that while they wished to have religious teaching in their day schools, if that could only be had at the price of endowing Roman Catholic schools in Ireland, a purely secular system was the preferable alternative. The Protestants of England, Cardinal Cullen notwithstanding, will be found taking the same ground. I know some clergymen affect to regard the matter with indifference. They have begun to use words which are not quite suited to their lips, "*fiat justitia ruat cœlum.*" But they do not mean that. They mean "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." First snatch the prize, and then try to keep it as best you may; blindly hoping that in some way or another, which as yet they see not, they will get over the difficulty. It is impossible to doubt, however, that when the crisis comes they will be found true to their Protestantism. Men can do strange things, sometimes, as we know. But no body of men can afford to sink themselves utterly in public estimation, by forgetting altogether their antecedents, and making themselves utterly bankrupt in character. Consistency will compel them to take their stand with the Protestants of Scotland and Ireland in protesting against the education of the country being placed by the Government, and at the expense of the nation, in the hands of the priests. How is the Government to face that difficulty? If they refuse to Ireland the same treatment as they have adopted towards England and Scotland the Roman Catholics have a just grievance, and a grievance which they will never tolerate. A feeling of indignation will be aroused which will soon neutralise all that has been done to conciliate Ireland. On the other hand, if they endow Roman Catholic Schools they will outrage the Protestant feeling of the nation. There is the dilemma, on one or the other horn of which the Government is sure to be impaled. It seems to me therefore

that we shall render them most important service, if by this resolution we warn them to desist in time from a line of policy which is as likely to prove ruinously fatal as it is essentially unjust. It is for the Government to consider these probable issues. As for us, I take it, whatever may be the consequences, our duty is plain. Consequences are not to be very nicely weighed on a Nonconformist platform. It is not with consequences, so much as principles, that we have to do. Consequences! we know what were the consequences of the fidelity of our forefathers,—imprisonment, confiscation of property, living bodies reduced by slow fires to heaps of ashes, scaffolds drenched with blood. These were the immediate consequences; the ultimate consequences were the uprising in their might of oppressed peoples, the overthrow of governments and dynasties, the gradual concession of our liberties and our rights. (Loud cheers.) The immediate consequences cannot be more painful in our case than theirs—let us hope that without the convulsions of their time, the ultimate consequences shall be no less glorious. And at all events let us remember that consequences belong to God, and that it is our duty in a sense of dependence on Him to lift up our banner that it may be displayed on behalf of the truth (Loud applause.)

The resolution was then carried amid enthusiastic cheering.

The Rev. ENOCH MELLOR, D.D.: The resolution which I have to move is—

> "That the system of subsidising religious denominations in the business of public education—which has unhappily been favoured and strengthened by the present Government—is deserving of condemnation, as being unwise in principle, unfair in its working, and injurious in its effects to the interests of the nation."

The indictment contained in this resolution is undoubtedly one of a most serious character. It is also one which ought not to be lightly made. And the very fact that I have undertaken to introduce and support so formidable a charge against a Government with which I have been politically identified proves that at least in my opinion the Educational Act which it was enabled to pass by the suspicious and significant aid of Conservative votes has violated the principles of common Justice. And further, the circumstance that so large and influential an assembly as this, consisting in great measure

of representative men and delegates from all parts of England, has been convened for the purpose of protesting against one Act, and one Act only, of a Government which in the main receives its most loyal and determined support, is a demonstration sufficiently strong that that one Act is, in the opinion of this assembly, of a very doubtful character. I disclaim for myself, and I am sure also I may disclaim for this meeting, and for those whom it represents, any wanton or capricious desire to embarass a Prime Minister, who has inscribed on the statute books of these realms some of the noblest measures which the genius of statesmanship ever conceived. The antagonism of which these meetings are the embodiment and expression is not against a Liberal Premier, nor against Liberal principles, but against what we hold to be a palpable departure from these principles. It is a demand for thorough-going consistency instead of a timid compromise which does not even give equal benefits to all, but perpetuates in a new form an old and unjust ascendancy. When the present Government undertook the work of preparing a measure of national elementary education, we cherished the hope that it would be one which would allay the contentions of years, and be another step of progress toward that time when the State will perform *the duties of the State,* and cease to intermeddle with the religious convictions and institutions of the people. But we have been sorely disappointed—we might almost say deceived. (Hear, hear.) The step has been backward instead of forward, and we have met this evening to protest against it, and to show cause why we thus protest. It is necessary at the outset to consider and remove certain misrepresentations, of which the advocates of the National Education League have been the victims. For our reputation is as dear to us as is the reputation of our opponents to them; and we shall not lightly suffer accusations to be made against us which are the offspring either of ignorance or malignity. It has, for example, been charged against us that our conception of education is wholly of a narrow and secular character; and that we are mistaken if we suppose that such an education is in any wise adapted either to make man a virtuous subject of this world or to prepare him for another. Now, I speak not only for myself, but for the great bulk of the supporters of the League, when I say

that no such restricted idea of education ever entered our heads. We know the nature of man better than to suppose that there is nothing within him except that which can be reached and raised by an education purely secular. We have never affirmed that the knowledge of reading would cure a man of his lusts; that acquaintance with geography will deliver him from drunkenness; that he would swear no more after learning the rules of orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody; that arithmetic would be a successful antidote against a fraudulent disposition. These things we have never affirmed as adherents of the general principles of the National Education League. There are, of course, among those who are ranged under the banner of the League, men who entertain widely different sentiments, both about human nature and about the means by which it is to be elevated and perfected. There are some, we doubt not, who are atheists. But what then? Is it on that account an atheistic association? It may serve the purpose of men who are more skilled in imputation than in reasoning to brand as irreligious a league which numbers among its supporters some prominent leaders of atheism. But a purpose which can be served by such disreputable means is thus convicted of infamy. We presume that atheists were found, and were rightly found, amongst the advocates of that free trade of which this very hall is a noble and enduring monument; but was the Anti-Corn Law League atheistic? We presume, too, that atheists were found among those who demanded the extension of the suffrage, but was the last Reform Act which was passed by Disraeli and the Earl of Derby atheistic? We presume, too, that atheists laboured for the disestablishment of the Irish Church; but was that measure, which received the support of dukes, earls, and even a few bishops, atheistic? There are surely some questions upon which it is possible for men to agree, who on others, and those the most important ones, are wide as the poles asunder. Atheists eat and drink, wake and sleep, buy and sell, read the newspapers, and take interest in politics and in the Tichborne case—(laughter)—but I have yet to learn that the enemies of the League have abandoned these operations, that they may escape what they deem a disreputable fellowship. It may, however, be urged that the charge we are now considering is

not based simply upon the accidental circumstance that the league obtains the support of atheists; but upon the broad and indisputable fact that in the education which it aims to administer it finds no place for religion. Let this be granted. What follows?—not surely upon any principle of reasoning current out of Bedlam—that the league is atheistic! No—a conclusion so vast and sweeping must rest on far ampler foundations. In what publication of the National League since its very commencement down to the present hour has the statement appeared that it aimed to give a complete education to the whole man? Find us in any of its documents, great or small, such a definition of education as absolutely excludes religion as a superstition, a falsehood, or a needless luxury, and we will admit that the charge of atheism has been satisfactorily established. But no such definition has ever been given; nor could it even be attempted, without dissolving the league into atoms. It would be quite a novel principle in reasoning if we were to conclude that not to teach a thing is the same as to affirm that it ought not to be taught. If we say that any matter is out of our province, we surely do not deny that it is not in the province of any other man. A tailor is not supposed to deny that his customer needs food, though he does not sell meat or cabbage; nor does a grocer regard clothing as superfluous because he does not keep a yard of cloth. Both of them believe in the existence of necessaries which they leave others to supply. And it is the same with respect to the National Education League. It looks upon the elements which go to constitute the education of man, and it sees that they are broadly divisible into two classes, the elements which are termed secular, and the elements which are termed religious. With regard to the secular, they are such as by common consent lie at the very foundation of all good instruction. No men in these days will contest their value, or deny that they ought to be imparted to all classes in the community. They possess also an indisputable character. They have little to do with conscience or with faith. There is no heresy in being able to read, to write, and to cipher. The rule of three is not a dangerous dogma. No important doctrine is involved in a child being taught that Calcutta is in India, Pekin in China, Lisbon in Portugal, and Madrid in Spain. A child may be taught the difference between

a comet, planet, and a fixed star without being in danger of heterodoxy. There is no pestilent error in the axioms, postulates and definitions of Euclid. No sane men, be their religious creed what it may, will squabble on these matters, and because of this very circumstance, that these matters are by universal consent important, and are agreed upon by those who scarcely agree upon any other subject, and least of all upon religion. The National Education League deems that it is the proper function of the State to administer out of the public purse that portion of education which is irrespective of conscience and faith, leaving that other portion of education which concerns conscience and faith to be administered by parents, or by the various religious bodies. (Applause.) In other words let the State teach those things in which all concur; and let the people impart by voluntary agencies those things which so sharply and widely divide them from each other. If this be atheism, simply because no religious creed is taught, then the development of the mind is atheism, the cultivation of the memory is atheism, the knowledge of the heavens and the earth is atheism, and I will add that common justice between man and man is also atheism. (Applause.) Now the Elementary Education Act in England and Wales, of which Mr. Forster is the reputed father, and for which he is of course proud to be held responsible, practically helps to perpetuate that abuse of the functions of the State of which we have had so much reason to complain. This is one of the charges contained in my resolution, and which unhappily is too capable of demonstration. We had a right to expect, and some of us did expect, that the new Act would follow in the train of recent legislation, and would bring us one step nearer to the abolition of all fictitious distinctions and false supremacies. A Government which had put an end to purchase in the army, and which had disestablished the Irish Church, might naturally be thought incapable even of conceiving a Bill which has created new and dangerous vested interests. But such a Bill is now *un fait accompli*, and is, as I conceive, one of the darkest blots on a so-called Liberal legislation. Was it, we would ask, Mr. Forster's intention to encourage the formation of Board schools? Or was this a mere pretext under which he meant, in fact, to develop still further the denominational and sectarian system

already existing? These questions we are bound to ask, because upon the answer we return to them will depend the judgment we form of the political sagacity or the political candour of Mr. Forster. Here was a wide area of ignorance confessedly unprovided for by the various denominational schools that were in existence at the time the Education Bill was drawn up. That ignorance was not overtaken, and there were no signs that it would be overtaken by the denominational schools. Hence the determination to frame an Act, the distinctive feature of which was to be the creation of school districts and School Boards, by means of which schools might be erected of an unsectarian character. It was this erection of Board schools of such a character that gave to an educational scheme favour in the eyes of the Nonconformists of this country, and that awakened the determination of our political and ecclesiastical opponents, if possible, to defeat its operation. But the question we desire to ask is this—what enthusiasm did the Right Hon. W. E. Forster possess in favour of the Board schools? Does the Bill itself reveal any such enthusiasm? Are its provisions framed so as to facilitate their creation and multiplication? We maintain that if the purpose of the present Bill was to cover the country with a network of Board schools, never was a purpose more systematically and signally defeated by the details of the Bill itself. Was it a proof of his sympathy with the principle of Board schools that he extended a special grace of six months to denominational schools? Was it a further proof of his sympathy that he opened a door wide and effectual during those six months for an unlimited number of applications for building grants, so that new sectarian schools might be erected, or old ones extended? Is it not in evidence that, while in 1869 only 192 applications were made for building grants, and in the first nine months of 1870, 144 applications were made; in the last three months of 1870, after the passing of the Act, there were no fewer than 3,230 applications, and these almost entirely by managers of denominational schools? The analysis of these applications presents a significant result, for out of them no fewer than 2,852 were made on behalf of the Established Church, 82 by Roman Catholics, 96 by British schools, 108 by various sections of Methodists, 15 by Baptists and Independents, 73 by undenomina-

tional schools, 2 by Unitarians, and 1 each by Presbyterians and Jews. If Mr. Forster *foresaw* that this provision of the Act in favour of denominational schools would stimulate such an extraordinary demand for grants in aid, what becomes of his ardour in favour of Board schools? and if he did not foresee that this would be the effect of the provision, what becomes of his political sagacity, and what claim has he upon our continued confidence? (Applause.) He has been the means of prompting, yes, breeding applications for State-money, which will raise the subsidies from about 30 per cent to 50 per cent; and these subsidies will, in our country, fall mainly into the hands of that Church which makes all its teaching subservient to its own sectarian doctrines and polity. In rural districts especially, he will have given to the Church of England a monopoly which will amount to a despotism over those Nonconformists, who, because comparatively few, will be unable to secure schools for themselves. There is provision for them in the Church school, and they must take the education there supplied. True—we are told that they will have the protection of the conscience clause against that religious teaching to which they object. But it is not every parent who will be heroic enough to come forward and boldly claim the protection of that clause, when he knows his very livelihood depends upon the parson and the squire, and on such as the parson and the squire can influence. (Applause.) Moreover, we believe that in rural districts the conscience clause will be little better than a delusion and a snare. That Mr. Forster's partiality for Board schools is a somewhat doubtful matter, is further evident from the 25th clause of the Act, which contains another sly glance of favour toward denominational schools. That clause runs thus: "The School Board may, if they think fit, from time to time, for a renewable period not exceeding six months, pay the whole or any part of the school fees payable at any public elementary school by any child resident in their district, whose parent is, in their opinion, unable from poverty to pay the same." This is the clause around which the strife has raged in almost all the elections of School Boards which have yet taken place. And it is of some moment to understand its meaning, and its possible application. The case it contemplates is that of a child whose parent is too poor to pay for its education. But this very case, if

the education sought be unsectarian, is met by the powers which the Board possesses under the Education Act, either to erect a school which shall be wholly free, or to remit the whole or any part of the fees in its ordinary schools; and these powers we submit are sufficient and ought to be satisfactory. The child can receive, if the Board so decide, as good an education in the Board schools as it can receive in any common day school in the country. The only thing it will not receive will be a religious education of a certain sectarian colour, and that too, paid for out of the public purse by many to whom that special form of religious education may be deeply offensive. But Mr. Forster, not content with two such ample provisions for the education of the child of the poor man, endows the School Board with powers to enable him to secure sectarian education in a denominational school, over which the Board has no control. In other words, under this provision it is possible that in every large town there may be some hundreds, or even thousands of children for whose education the Board will have to pay in denominational schools. The Board has its own schools, no matter; it has ample accommodation, no matter; it has a sufficient staff of competent teachers, no matter; it has gone to the trouble of rating the town, and raising the money necessary for carrying on the work, no matter; it *must* also or *may* subsidise existing denominational schools by paying for the education of children there. I say it *must* or *may*, though the Education Department in London seems bent, as far as it dare venture, to turn the *may* into *must*. And here I shall speak without reserve. (Hear, hear.) What is the function of the Education Department in London? Is it that of administering the Act, or of contravening it. (Hear, hear.) It is that of administering it, and beyond this it has no right to take one single step. But it has taken that step, and seems bent upon usurping distinctive legislation upon matters on which Parliament has pronounced no deliverance, or of coercing School Boards in *one* course when the Act of Parliament has left them the option of *two*. Several School Boards for example, have passed bye-laws, in which they resolved not to pay the school fees of children who were to be educated in denominational schools. Among other School Boards that of *South Shields* adopted this course, and when the by-laws

were sent up to the Education Department for approval, they were returned with a request that the Board would reconsider its decision. By what authority did they venture on such request? The School Board knew its own business as well as their lordships—(cheers)—it had considered its duty—it had resolved upon it—it had embodied its resolution in a bye-law, and all this it had done in strict accordance with the provisions of the Act, but their lordships, constituting themselves into a supplementary and irresponsible Parliament, sought to give the screw an extra turn and to conceal the very discretion which the Act expressly allows. For their lordships personally we may entertain the highest respect, but this conduct we denounce as insolent towards the School Boards, and as an illegal attempt to tyrannise over the free action of the popular institutions of this country. This attempt we resent, and this attempt we shall steadfastly resist. (Loud cheers.) Let it not be overlooked that if a School Board send with public money a child to a denominational school, the education for which it pays is specifically, and by prominent intention, *religious*. The child could have the secular in the Board School as well as in the denominational. He does not go to the denominational because he cannot get a good secular education in the Board school. He goes for the sectarian education, and the fee is paid for that, the secular education being little more than an accident in the matter. Is this right? will the public suffer its money to be given to schools, into which it cannot enter, where it has no representative, of which no account is rendered, and where religious opinions of the most extreme and contradictory character are imparted? Have we freed ourselves from one church-rate in order that we may be saddled with another, and this, too, more offensive still? I shall be amazed if the Nonconformists of England and Wales do not demand, in a tone which even Mr. Forster will be compelled to hear, that the 25th section of the Education Act be unconditionally repealed. If there be any truth in the homely proverb, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating," what must we think of the pudding which contains such a stone as is breaking the teeth of the people wherever a School Board election occurs? The people asked for bread, Mr. Forster has given them a stone; they asked for wholesome fish, Mr. Forster has given them a serpent; they

asked for education, Mr. Forster has given them contention and strife. They asked for a scheme which would bring into schools children that were wandering outside in rags, and ignorance, and crime; he has given us a scheme which does not contain one unembarrassed provision by which the attendance of such children can be compulsorily secured. Nay, more, if the experience of Salford may be taken as an illustration of what is likely to occur in other boroughs, his scheme will diminish instead of increasing the numbers in attendance; for in Salford there was a decrease in one quarter as compared with the previous one of 713 children, and this, though 1,737 children were paid for by the Board in the very quarter in which the diminished attendance occurred.

It is another and serious vice in this Education Act that it involves the principle of *concurrent endowment.* From this charge no sophistry, however plausible, can effectually vindicate it. When rates are paid out of a common purse for the religious education of one child in the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, for the religious education of another in the worship of the Virgin and in the belief in the infallibility of the Pope, for the religious education of another in Trinitarianism, and the religious education of another in Unitarianism, it is nothing less than an endowment in common of various and contradictory creeds. That this is the case is now being discovered even by some who until recently seemed blind enough to the fact. So long as they thought that the Education Act was likely to prove of special benefit to themselves, their conscience seemed to lie undisturbed under the imputation of concurrent endowment; but now that they scent from afar, or from near, another Education Bill for Ireland they are filled with indignation and alarm, and are denouncing beforehand any Government which shall introduce a Bill enabling the Roman Catholics to educate their children in Romish doctrines out of the public purse. You will remember that many weeks ago the Nonconformists of Liverpool met to protest against the Act, and especially against the clause we have just considered, on the ground that it involved the principle of concurrent endowment. But this objection seemed at that time scarcely to have dawned except on the minds of the Noncon-

formists. Since then, the light has spread, and on the evening of the 15th of this month another meeting was held in the college, which was numerously attended, and at which a Church layman was in the chair, and a Church clergyman was the leading speaker. The very first resolution passed on that occasion protests against the payment of school fees by the Board, on the ground that it was a "most obnoxious form of concurrent endowment." The main current of the reasoning was decidedly adverse to the Roman Catholics. The circumstance that the Roman Catholics of Liverpool were likely to profit so largely out of School Board funds if they were used according to the permission of the 25th clause gave great point and zest to many of the observations that were then made. But we base our objections to concurrent endowment on no such narrow foundation. It is not whether Romanism be right, or be wrong; whether it be a true religion, or a false superstition. Of Romanism, I have my own convictions, which I have derived not from books alone, be they Protestant or Papist, but from my own travels in those countries where it has had unlimited sway, and especially in Rome itself, its spiritual metropolis and home, where the system has been able to display itself without check, and bring forth its fruit to perfection. In England it is an exotic, in Rome it is indigenous, and as we judge of a palm or a banana tree, not by the stunted specimens which we can rear with infinite difficulties in these northern climes, but by their luxuriant magnificence in their native soil, and under their native skies, so do we judge of the essential spirit of the Papacy; and from what I have seen of its effects in Rome, I believe that no calamity more disastrous to the godliness, the liberty, the knowledge, or the independence of a people could happen to any nation than that it should bow to the yoke of a priesthood which hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest its deeds should be reproved. But we have not to consider in this place and at this time the errors of any religious system, or if we had, then we should refer to the Romanism which is in the Church of England, to the confessional which is being advocated, to the doctrine of the real presence which is spreading, and even to prayers for the dead, which are being vindicated by some so-called Protestant clergymen without disguise. We protest, however, against the endowment of the true religion, because it does

not need it; and therefore we protest the more against the concurrent endowment of many religions, for, of these, if any be true, the others must be more or less false. And while it may seem to shallow thinkers a proof that a Government takes interest in the spread of religion, when it provides for the inculcation of all and any religion, I know of no one fact which is better fitted to awaken in the breasts of profounder thinkers a deep and contemptuous unbelief. For you will observe that religion is not simply a thing of taste. No one who believes in it at all, believes it to be only this. If religions were like colours which have not much to do with conviction or with life, then we can well conceive of a concurrent endowment of all the classes, for all would be equally right, and every man might claim to have his own peculiar taste considered, without feeling that he was either inflicting wrong on his neighbour or sustaining it at his hands. Or if religion were like food, and all religions were but different kinds of food, each equally wholesome, but not all equally acceptable to different men, then a Government might become keeper of the great national refreshment institution, and authorise grants in aid for the feeding of all classes of the community. But, is not religion held to be truth, truth as against error—salutary truth as against pernicious error? Are not some religions declared to be superstitious and soul-destroying? What think you, you who are so ready to charge the League, with atheism, what think you is the tendency of your own principle—that of endowing all forms of religion as if there were no truth in any? That is the way, surely, to produce a universal scepticism. The system of concurrent endowment is not unjust simply because it supplies aid to Romanism, it is unjust because it supplies aid to Church of Englandism, and other isms. As members of this nation we protest alike against the assumptions of one religious party or of another, to set itself up as the sole representative of religious truth. But we would ask what is the course which Mr. Forster means to pursue when a Bill has to be framed for the education of Ireland? He has learned by this time what are the demands of the prelates and the leading clergy of the Romish Church. How does he like them? What does he mean to do with them? If Denominationalism is to be supreme in England, how will he consistently forbid its supremacy in Ireland? And, if he cannot

forbid its supremacy, then is he prepared for the indignation which he will arouse in England, in Wales, in Scotland and in the North of Ireland? And if he is resolved to resist the Roman Catholic demands, then is he prepared, is the Government prepared, for that new Irish grievance which will engender a deeper and more envenomed disaffection towards England and English rule than has existed for the last fifty years? Mr. Forster boasted that he "would canter over the religious difficulty," but in his adventurous horsemanship he has fallen into the meshes of Denominationalism, and there he lies in a hopeless entanglement. As for us, our course is clear, and we mean to pursue it until we have obtained a national education which shall trample upon no man's conscience, and which, instead of widening and perpetuating the divisions which exist among us shall heal them, and give to our nation a unity, a power, and a happiness which it has never yet attained. (Loud applause.)

The resolution was seconded in a few words by the Rev. Dr. RALEIGH.

Mr. ALFRED ILLINGWORTH, M.P., supported the resolution. He said: Ladies and gentlemen, at this time of the night, and after the lesson which has been administered from this platform, it is not my intention to occupy more than two or three minutes; but, Mr. Chairman, if you and I were vindictive men, we might well say to-night that we had had our revenge. In the House of Commons we formed a small party that sought to show to the Government the danger which was ahead. Heedlessly Mr. Forster and his allies went on, and now we find the whole Nonconformist body of this country in open rebellion. (Applause.) I want only just to point out one thing which I think is on our part a practical duty. I do hope that the Nonconformists are not looking forward to join issue finally with the Government upon the Irish Educational Bill. I would rather be associated with the atheists in securing an act of justice than join with the bigots in refusing to Roman Catholics their rights. (Cheers.) Therefore, we wish the Government to understand that we shall take their declaration of policy upon the Scotch measure, and not upon any Irish Bill—(hear, hear)—and that really the Nonconformists of this country will carry out the threat which they have been obliged to indulge

in; that if the Government offers to Scotland a denominational Bill, then we shall have lost all faith in the present Liberal Government, and the dissolution of the Liberal party will be inevitable. I could only suggest one thing that would save us, and that is that when the Scotch Bill is carried to the last stage in the House of Commons, and made eminently satisfactory to pious Churchmen, there should be just this clause added, "That this Bill apply also to Ireland." (Applause.) I think if that were done even Scotchmen would repudiate their own measure, and be very glad to abandon it altogether. Sir, we cannot be very far from a general election. Let us make our position well defined. We have gone with the Liberal party so long as the object was the removal of grievances which fell upon us all as a party. Most of the grievances which affected those who were not Nonconformists in the Liberal party are removed. The modest request we make now is that those with whom we have acted so long should go with us to the removal of our special grievances. If they decline the union, the alliance, and the co-operation, we cannot help it. We have a duty to ourselves, and I hope we shall perform it. (Applause.)

The Chairman then vacated the chair, which was taken by Mr. Richards, M.P. for Cardiganshire.

Mr. R. W. DALE, who was greeted with prolonged applause, said: I have to move:—

"That the most cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to Henry Richard, Esq., for his courteous and able conduct of the meeting to-night."

(Applause.) I am not going to make a speech. ("Go on.") I am perfectly sure *you* won't stop if I do go on. I move this resolution most heartily, because Mr. Henry Richard in the House of Commons is precisely the same man as Mr. Henry Richard in the chair of this meeting to-night. (Applause.) You have listened to him to-night with enthusiasm, with admiration, with perfect sympathy, but the position that Mr. Henry Richard and his friends occupy in the House of Commons is a position of great and severe difficulty. On nearly all those questions in which you and I take the deepest and most intense interest, Mr. Henry Richard, and those who work with him, are

left in the House almost without supporters. That is the fault of the Nonconformists of England and Wales. (Hear, hear.) It is our fault that when a division is taken on any one of our questions, we have only some sixty, or seventy, or eighty, or a hundred Members going with Mr. Henry Richard and with Mr. Edward Miall—(applause)—into the lobby. We have come to Manchester from every part of England, to say that we do not intend it to be so in the next Parliament. (Applause.) We ask the Nonconformists in every Liberal constituency to assert their right to a voice in the choice of the Liberal candidate. We ask the Nonconformists of every constituency where Nonconformity has any considerable political power, to make it clearly and definitely understood by the local Liberals, that unless regard is paid to Nonconformist principles and aims in the selection of candidates for the suffrages of the Liberal constituencies, Nonconformist support must be withdrawn from the Liberal candidates. (Applause.) Now we are told that in doing this we are in danger of dividing the Liberal party. I have only to reply, that our true object is to inspire the Liberal party with new life and with new vigour. The Liberal party cannot live on its great traditions. The Liberal party cannot live on the fame of its illustrious leaders. Its strength has always been derived and must always be derived from its fidelity to principles which are not yet embodied in the legislation of the country. It is of the very essence of the Liberal party to have unaccomplished hopes. Conservatism stands by the past, approves of the institutions that we have received from our ancestors, and desires only to amend and improve, not to reform them. But Liberalism springs from that beneficient law according to which all progress in right doing on the part either of individuals or of nations is uniformly rewarded by the discovery of a brighter ideal than had been discovered before. (Applause.) Now, sir, I want to know what are the unaccomplished hopes of the Liberal party at the present moment. What is the programme of the party? The ballot will, as we hope, soon become law, and when that becomes law, what is to distinguish the general political principles of the Liberal party from the political principles explained and illustrated by Lord Derby in this county only a few days ago? The Liberal party wants a programme, and

I ask what programme has it? Mr. Gladstone;—this, at the present moment is the whole of its programme. It is a creed with one article; but I do not believe in Unitarianism in a political creed; or, I should rather say, I do not believe in political Ultramontanism, for to repose blind and unqualified faith simply in your political leader, apart from principles, is, after all, political Ultramontanism. I want something broader, something more generous than that, and the Liberal party, all England through, must understand that the Liberal leaders have certain great principles to which they intend to be faithful in the future, or the Liberal party will be hopelessly destroyed and broken up. Now, sir, I believe that by coming together to Manchester we are assisting to give the Liberal party a creed, a policy, and a future, and in doing this no man will help us more than Mr. Henry Richard, to whom I now beg to move that the best thanks of this meeting be presented. (Applause.)

The Rev. A. MACLAREN: I am quite sure that I shall best consult the feelings of this meeting by contenting myself with simply doing what all the other speakers have said they were going to do, and none of them but Mr. Dale has done. I simply second the resolution which has been proposed.

The resolution was unanimously agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: I beg to thank you for your kindness.

THE CONFERENCE.

THE first meeting of the Conference was held on Wednesday morning in the Friends' Meeting-house, Mount Street, which was crowded with delegates and visitors (the latter occupying the galleries) at an early hour. The chair was taken at half-past ten o'clock, by Richard Johnson, Esq., of Manchester, who delivered the following

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

Gentlemen,—On Saturday and Sunday, December 10th and 11th, when the intelligence came that the Prince of Wales was sick, it might be, unto death, the arrangements for the Conference were already completed, and some delegates from the more distant parts of the country were already on their way to Manchester. To adjourn the Conference seemed both inconvenient and dangerous to its success, but the Committee of Management at last resolved that it was both necessary and proper to face the risk. (Hear, hear.) The attention of all Englishmen, whether Nonconformists or no, was so powerfully attracted to the dying Prince, as we thought him, to his Royal mother and his young wife, that it would have been painful, in truth impossible, during those days to give to that important group of questions which we have to debate that concentrated attention which they deserve, and will now receive at your hands. (Applause.) But as a few weeks ago we sorrowed with the sorrow of our Queen, so now it is our welcome duty to rejoice with her rejoicing—(applause)—and before I sit down I will move that a congratulatory address be presented to Her Majesty upon the Prince of Wales's happy

restoration to health. (Loud applause.) Human imagination refuses to conceive upon earth a more exalted position than that occupied by the monarch of these realms. Long and eventful centuries have so identified England and her fortunes with the Royal house that the Sovereign has become, as it were, the keystone which holds together the stately fabric of the British Empire—the source and centre of the national unity—the highest and truest representative of our common country. For more than thirty years the Queen has filled this foremost place in the hearts and affections of her subjects; and while she has scrupulously discharged the duties of her supreme office, she has never once forgotten the moderation and self-restraint which become a constitutional monarch. Our loyal gratitude is due to this gracious lady for the political service she has thus rendered to her people, but hardly less for the moral good she has wrought by the silent force of her own simple and virtuous manners. (Applause.) The experience of many countries and many generations has shown how rapidly the contagion of a corrupt court destroys the strictness of national morals and the purity of domestic life. It is a happy thing for us that the fierce light, which beats upon a throne, in our Queen continually brings to-day some new title to her people's regard, some new act of charity and consideration for others, of womanly gentleness and devotion. It is a happy thing for us that the highest lady in the land is herself such as Christian men pray that their own wives and daughters may be. (Applause.) May she reign in prosperity for many years to come; and when in the fulness of time the Prince shall succeed to his inheritance, may he follow in his mother's steps, and reap the same bountiful harvest of a nation's love. (Applause.) Now, will you allow me to say a few words on the general business of the Conference? Gentlemen, the churches and societies which have sent you as their delegates here to-day constitute a large part of the moral and mental strength of England. The constitution of our country owes that continuous development which has been its distinguishing characteristic during the last 200 years mainly to the unswerving allegiance which, at the cost of much personal suffering, Nonconformists have always rendered to the principles of orderly freedom; and now when the hour has struck that they should raise their

resolute and unanimous demand for that enfranchisement which they have already secured for others, when, after repeated victories in the field of politics, they ask for themselves not supremacy, not any unjust preference, but simple religious equality—our conviction of the goodness of our cause, our confidence in the honesty and fairness of our countrymen, our experience of the past, all assure us that success is not far distant. We who are here represent the Nonconformist churches of England in a sense and in a degree that no other assembly has hitherto done, and it is of the utmost moment for the grave question we have in hand that we should strive in all we say and do to show ourselves worthy of the simple, serious, God-fearing men and women of whom we are the delegates. The duty is laid upon us of using our political rights, as all other rights and possessions, to the glory of God and the relief of man's estate, but we must be watchful to maintain in political conflict the Christian mind and temper. We must abstain from hard words and hard thoughts of our adversaries; we must stoop to no unworthy means; we must seek no unfair gains; we must be at least as careful of others' rights as of our own, scarcely protesting against wrongs inflicted upon ourselves unless higher than personal interests are concerned. Let us bear in memory the lives of our predecessors whose praise is in the Churches, who were angry and sinned not, who united loving patience with manly resistance to oppression, who were saints, and therefore patriots. Let us tread in the steps of Bunyan and Baxter, of Alleine and Rutherford, and complete the task which they have bequeathed to us in the same spirit in which they suffered and acted. (Applause.) But in our great campaign against ecclesiastical injustice we have numerous and powerful allies, whose aid we accept, although their spirit and their aims are not wholly the same as ours. The questioning temper of science has seduced some of her followers to deny vital beliefs which we know to be true upon higher than intellectual evidence; but when the foremost representatives of demonstrated knowledge insist that the honour and treasure of the State should not be used in support of theological creeds, and that truth is strongest when left to her unaided powers, confident the while, as we are, that the religion of Christ is true, and must prevail in every conflict, we joyfully receive their evidence

in favour of the principle for which we are contending, and enlist their services towards the achievement of our end. The Nonconformists have always been a law-abiding people. They have remembered the apostolic order, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers." Projects of revolution find no admission among them; but when the working men of London and of other great centres of industry affirm on purely secular grounds that a Church possessed of a national endowment and exclusive rights inevitably arrays itself on the side of privilege and monopoly, and, therefore, stands in the way of political progress, we acknowledge the justice and force of their views, and welcome them to our side as we welcome the men of science. Even within the circle of the Established Church itself the cause of religious equality receives an increasing measure of sympathy and support. There are, God be thanked, many good men to be found who have the fortitude to cast away the prejudices of early training, tradition and immediate interest, and to insist that no distinctions, no emoluments, can compensate a Church for the feebleness of discipline, the deadness of feeling, the scandals and the contradictions involved in servitude to the State. But after all, our chief hope of victory must arise from the determined efforts of the Nonconformists themselves. All things animate us to a decisive conflict. With our adversaries no terms of peace can be made. (Applause.) Although their leaders constantly and publicly acknowledge that their ultimate defeat is not far distant, still they will not let us alone or cease from aggression. Thanks to the men of Birmingham—(loud applause)—to Mr. Dixon—(applause)—Mr. Dale—(applause)—Mr. Crosskey—(applause)—and their associates and others—it is seen at length that, under colour of the recent Education Acts, a large additional endowment has been conferred upon the Established Church, and that the ecclesiastics of England have gained more than was ever lost by their brethren in Ireland. The discussions of the last six months have revealed to us our own strength. If we are as resolved and as earnest as our fathers were, no Liberal Administration dare ask, for very shame, our support in dealing with petty questions of the hour while our great wrong continues unredressed, while we are ourselves dishonoured and humiliated. (Applause.) We have in the House of Com-

mons many able and loyal leaders. Above all we have in the person of Mr. Miall—(loud and long-continued applause)—a statesman who, for power of lucid statement, for temper, for policy, for disinterestedness, is inferior to no living Englishman; who, if we are true to him, will lead us to victory; and who, after victory, will, I trust, find in the veneration and love of his countrymen the reward due to those who make brethren to dwell together in unity. (Applause.) Unity of feeling is the first condition of national safety and national happiness. Unhappy France has suffered mainly because hers is a divided people. And the perils of division have begun to appear among us also. Would to God that the rankest root of bitterness, the most dangerous stumbling-block of religious privilege and religious inequality, was at length cast out from amongst us, and that in public life we no longer stood face to face—Churchman against Dissenter and Dissenter against Churchman—but side by side, Christians and Englishmen! (Loud applause.)

The following address was then read by the Rev. A. THOMSON and unanimously agreed to:—

"TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"May it please your Majesty,—We, the delegates and representatives of Protestant Nonconforming Churches and associations in different parts of the United Kingdom, now assembled in Manchester, desire to approach your Majesty with feelings of the deepest loyalty and affection. We would most respectfully offer to your Majesty the assurance of our heartfelt sympathy in the prolonged and distressing anxieties which have been felt by your Majesty, by her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, and all the other members of your Majesty's family during the painful and alarming illness with which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales recently has been afflicted. In common with the rest of your Majesty's subjects, our fervent prayers have not ceased to be offered to Almighty God for the preservation and recovery of His Royal Highness, and for the support and comfort of your Majesty and of Her Royal Highness during the continuance of the trial. We now thankfully acknowledge the Divine Mercy which has interposed to spare the life of His Royal Highness when in imminent peril, and to grant him a measure of recovery; and we earnestly pray that His Royal Highness may speedily be restored to complete health, and may be preserved to be the object of a loyal people's hope and affectionate esteem.

"That your Majesty may enjoy for many years to come the choicest tokens of the Divine Goodness, and that your Majesty's reign—which has been so signally productive of blessings to all classes of your people, through

adherence to the true principles of national progress—may continue to be brightened with the sunshine of peace and prosperity, is the constant prayer of your Majesty's most dutiful and loving subjects—the Protestant Nonconformists of the United Kingdom."

The chair was then vacated by Mr. Johnson, and taken by Mr. EDWARD MIALL, M.P., who on rising was greeted with oft-repeated cheers, said: Gentlemen of the Conference, after the exceedingly appropriate and eloquent words of the chairman who preceded me respecting the illness of the Prince of Wales, and after the memorial which you have adopted to Her Majesty, it will be superfluous for me to advert to that subject as I intended. I can only add that in your name I am sure I may say, God be thanked that the Prince of Wales's life has been spared—(hear, hear)—and may breathe forth the prayer that he may have been spared for great good to the people of these realms. (Hear, hear.) We have come together, gentlemen, as Nonconformists it is true, but not as having any special interests but the interests of our country to promote. (Hear, hear.) We shall have to discuss many matters, some of principle and some of detail, arising out of the working of the Endowed Schools Act, and out of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, and the mode of its administration since it became law. We shall be charged with impatience for not having given the latter Act a fair trial; we shall be told that the education of the people of this country is of such paramount importance, and is so imperatively required for the sake of national progress, liberty, and good order, that all the objections we have taken or may take to some of the methods resorted to by the existing law for this purpose, dwindle into insignificance in comparison with the main object of the Act. And it may be that, looked at singly and apart, every one of the proceedings which we deem to be a violation of our principles might, for the sake of the great practical work in hand, be submitted to, though with reluctance. But, gentlemen, I conceive that it is not from the mischiefs separately considered which these unjust and impolitic provisions and proceedings may inflict upon Nonconformity, or, as we think, upon elementary education itself—(hear, hear)—that we draw our chief motives for assembling in such numbers here to-day. It is because in faithfulness to our settled convictions, and

in the discharge of the responsibilities which arise out of them, because in love to our country, and in earnest concern for its future character and destiny, we cannot stand by and silently witness the employment of the organised authority of law and of Government in handing over the minds of the children of the great majority of our fellow subjects to the formative influence of any priesthood whatever, be it Anglican, or be it Roman. (Applause.) This, however, though not perhaps in intention, yet in effect, is the true meaning of denominational education. It is embodied in the Elementary Education Act; it has been strengthened by the Revised Code; it has been emphasised by the action of the Education Department. We have to breast the current which is bearing this nation backward towards priestly supremacy. The Nonconformists have done so before in the course of their history, and at the expense of not a little which they hold dear. In evil report as in good report, in dishonour as well as in honour, in weakness as well as in power, they will do so again—(cheers)—and cost what it may to them in feeling or in favour or in position, they will not abandon the ground towards which insidious and hostile approaches are being made under cover of zeal for a nominal but unreal religious equality. Well, but we are admonished that "it is too soon to reopen a compromise so recently agreed to by all parties." (Laughter.) A compromise, forsooth! Who negotiated it? Who concluded it? (Hear, hear.) Who bound themselves by it? (Hear, hear.) Not the Nonconformists—(applause)—so far as I know, at least. What steps were taken to consult their views? (Hear, hear.) What heed was paid to their protests? Who gave to any Minister in the Cabinet, or out of it, authority to represent them in affecting that series of transactions the upshot of which has been, in all that relates to popular education, to leave them out in the cold? No, gentlemen, let it be fully understood that we are perfectly free from any self-imposed restrictions, but those of patriotism, of wisdom, and of conscience. There has been no compromise. (Hear, hear.) There is none. (Hear, hear.) There has been a cession of our claims, but not by us. We have been delivered over into the hands of ecclesiastical monopolists, but not with our own consent. (Applause.) Gentlemen, it does not become Nonconformists to boast beyond their

measure for what has happened in this educational controversy; they must take some share of the blame. (Hear, hear.) In the critical moment they faltered in the distinct and unequivocal assertion of their principles, and, like Samson when his tresses were shorn, they lost their strength. It is more manly because more candid to confess than to conceal it. But I think I should be justified in saying that we were all taken somewhat unawares. Amid the confusion of party cries, unable at the moment to discriminate clearly between our religious principles and our religious sentiment, and prompted by instincts which were true enough in themselves but not wisely directed, we were for a time bewildered, and lost sight of our only tenable position—namely, that when the State, which comprises all members of the community, undertakes to apply taxation, whether by Parliamentary grant or by local rate, or Parliamentary authority direct or indirect, to the purpose of religious teaching, it trespasses beyond its legitimate province, takes upon itself responsibilities which it has not suitable qualifications to discharge, and subjects itself to the alternative of pursuing, but ineffectually pursuing, religious equality by concurrent and proportionate subsidies to all religious faiths and opinions, or by selecting one or more from amongst many for support and favour. Upon this clear principle we must take our stand if we mean to achieve a satisfactory and permanent settlement of the question of National Education—a united literary education by the State, separate religious education by parents or by the voluntary agency of religious communities. (Applause.) If we have the courage of our convictions, we are bound to enunciate as distinctly as possible this broad intelligible position; we shall then hold the base of operations from which we shall be able to carry on the contest with all the advantage which the case will admit of. Nor will it be so imperative upon us to press for the immediate and simultaneous application of our principle to every one of the instances in which it is now violated. As to the when, the how, and the how much, we may reserve to ourselves liberty both of judgment and of action. Our strategy and tactics may fairly be conformed, from time to time, to the conditions under which the struggle must be carried on. We cannot be expected to do at once all that we

are resolved to do whenever we can. We have a right, however, to demand, and it may be found expedient and wise to demand now, at this time, that the retrospective steps by which Legislation, at the instance of what we think a friendly Government, has increased the distance between us and religious equality in educational matters, shall be retraced as early as may be. (Loud applause.) This would seem to be about the least we could insist upon. We may not get it immediately. We may have to exhaust the penalty entailed upon us by the confusion and division of opinion which the premature introduction of Mr. Forster's measure in 1870 occasioned amongst us. It was possible for the Nonconformists, and, I may add, for the great majority of the working men—newly enfranchised classes—to be ridden down without warning by our allies, and surrendered by our leaders into the hands of our opponents. It is not to be wondered at that we were, for the time being, distracted by so unexpected an occurrence; but it does seem strange that they who did this thing did not bear in mind that it is not thus that Nonconformists can be dragooned into a final abandonment of the ground they have so long occupied. (Applause.) We are patient, it is true; but many a chapter of history has shown that we are also persistent to the end. (Applause.) When we are *bonâ fide* consulted we are disposed to be accommodating—perhaps too accommodating. (Hear, hear.) But neither our glorious traditions, our past triumphs, or our present position, will allow us to sit down tamely under high-handed arrangements, by which we have been coolly victimised. This conference, I trust, will do nothing inconsiderate, nothing rash, nothing wherein passion should predominate over judgment; but there is one thing, I trust, it will do—it will vindicate the moral dignity of the Nonconformist bodies—(applause)—and will give a pledge to the world that, when the fitting time arrives, Dissenters will not shrink from marching to the field of electoral conflict in one unbroken, orderly, and solemn array, under the flag of religious equality—(loud applause)—regardless of the consequences either to themselves or to those who might have led them forward to fresh victories in behalf of complete freedom of conscience, but who preferred to go over to the camp of our Conservative and clerical antagonists. Now, should the wide difference between

us and our former political allies be unhappily pushed to disruption; it ought, in bare justice to Nonconformists, to be borne in mind that neither the cause nor the issue of it has been of their seeking. (Hear, hear.) Their loyalty to the party with which they have been associated is not to be impeached. It is not they who have strained the ties of union by imposing new imperative conditions upon their old friends. (Hear, hear.) If those ties are eventually snapped asunder, it will be owing to the fact that they have been abruptly used to drag us back to a position we long since left behind us. We cannot again submit to the legal subjection of any of our great national interests to sacredotal ascendancy. Those who attempt, and who doggedly persist in the attempt to make us do so, must accept the responsibility of what they do. It is they, not we, that have sowed discord in the ranks of Liberalism; it is they, not we, whom history will either blame or applaud should discord ripen into division. But, gentlemen, let us cherish a hope, faint though it may be, that Mr. Gladstone will yet find or adopt some scheme of conciliation which shall be no less satisfactory to us than honourable to himself. (Applause.) Such a scheme, according to my humble judgment, has within the last few days been submitted to the public by the National Education League. (Applause.) It is not my business, of course, to expound it; no doubt it will be expounded by some member of that body before the Conference finally separates. It has struck my mind, however, as offering the completest, the fairest, the most permanent, and the most feasible solution of the ecclesiastical difficulty in the settlement of the educational question. (Hear, hear.) But be that as it may, we have a right to look to the head of Her Majesty's Government to lift the question out of its present position—a position which has everywhere re-kindled and intensified the flames of religious animosity, and which threatens to become as great a social mischief as it is and cannot but be disastrous to the cause of national elementary education. And, gentlemen, let us not forget that after all this last is the matter which should give us most concern. Till we can succeed in detaching the education of the youthful mind of this country from priestly intolerance and sectarian strife, we may be sure that the results of our education efforts, even when backed by the whole power of

the State, will be comparatively worthless—religiously speaking, worse than useless. That Nonconformists may do their part towards effecting the separation of the precious from the vile, and may hand down national institutions for the instruction of the children of the poor to a remote posterity as a rich legacy won by their fidelity to principle, their courage, and their self-denial, is not, I trust, too fond or too selfish a wish for any of us to entertain. Gentlemen, let that wish inspire our souls while we remain together in this Conference, and with God's blessing, some worthy advance will be made towards an assured certainty that it will be ultimately and fully realised. (Loud cheers.)

The following paper was then read by Professor A. S. WILKINS, of Owens College, on

RELIGIOUS EQUALITY IN THE UNIVERSITIES.

It may be thought by many of those who are gathered here that the appearance of the present subject on our programme requires a word of explanation. "Have we not had," it may well be asked, "in the last session of Parliament, an act to free the universities from the trammels of religious tests? This Act has been referred to in every ministerial speech as one of the few legislative triumphs of the session. What need is there to raise again before a great Conference like the present the well-worn question of religious equality at the universities? Now, no one can deny that real and momentous advantages have already been secured. Any one, whatever his religious opinions, may now enter at any of the Oxford or Cambridge colleges; he is free to compete during his undergraduate career for all the university and college prizes, exhibitions, and scholarships; unless he declares himself a member of the Church of England, he cannot be compelled to attend the college services; and when he has taken his degree, he is eligible not only for a fellowship, but also for the higher honour of serving his college as tutor or lecturer. Nowhere in his course can his conscientious scruples to accept dogmatic tests stand in the way of his enjoyment of all the advantages to which his merits entitle him. Henceforward, with the limitations that are immediately to be noted, every Englishman may wear all that he has brains to win. (Applause.) And if it had been only the advantage

of individuals to which the long-continued struggle of the Liberal party with sectarian exclusiveness had been directed, I think it would be well for us to rest content with what has already been secured. But we have been contending, not for emolument, but for principle. (Hear, hear.) It is comparatively a little thing that four or five men of proved ability should be annually excluded by religious tests from positions of honour and advantage; it is a matter of vast importance that no religious body whatever should have entrusted to it an undue share in the higher education of the nation. (Applause.) This and nothing less has been the object of the struggles of the friends of religious equality, both in and out of the Church of England. But how can this be said to be effected so long as it is deliberately enacted that the great majority of colleges shall have at their head a clergyman of the Established Church, that bishops of that Church shall in many cases continue to wield the absolute and irresponsible powers of the visitor, and that clergy of that Church shall have important privileges over all others as regards the tenure of fellowships? These are the inequalities which yet remain, and to each of them, if time permits, I propose very briefly to call your attention. A word or two may be expedient as to the history of the retention of these injustices. When the University Tests Bill was before the House of Commons, reformers found, with very much disappointment, and not a little indignation, that clerical fellowships and headships were excluded from its operation. Various reasons might be assigned for this. The ostensible one was the respect due to the House of Lords, which, having declined to consider the Bill introduced in the previous session, on the plea of want of time, was supposed to have a moral claim that the identically same Bill should be presented again for their consideration. Kindly supporters of the Government pointed to the numerous questions which might arise from a proposal to abolish all clerical fellowships, and urged that the time which would be needed for the discussion of these might be of serious consequence to the prospects of the Bill. Severer critics ascribed the omission to the Premier's growing habit of looking for guidance on ecclesiastical questions rather to his opponents than to his supporters. (Hear, hear.) And the sneers of the

latter seem to have found their justification when Mr. Fawcett proposed the abolition of clerical fellowships and headships. He was supported by 160 members, and defeated only by 22 votes. But I find that in this majority not less than 25 members of the Government voted—(hear, hear)—and that several Nonconformists like Mr. Samuel Morley and Sir Francis Goldsmid followed the lead of Mr. Gladstone. ("Shame.") Had the Government simply been neutral in the matter, it cannot be doubted that we should have been freed a year ago from what the *Times* on the day after this division justly called "the oppression and the scandal of compulsory orders at the universities." It is not possible to make any general statement as to the tenure of a fellowship, because the conditions vary greatly in the different colleges. At two colleges at Oxford and two at Cambridge there is no obligation upon any of the fellows to take holy orders. In these, therefore, but in these alone, the Nonconformist is on an absolute equality with a Churchman. But in all the other colleges, composing of course the great majority of both the universities, there are terms of tenure which fall under one of the two following classes: either a certain proportion of the fellows are obliged to be in holy orders, or every fellow is bound to be ordained after holding his fellowship for a certain number of years. As an instance of the former class we may take Clare College, Cambridge, where out of the whole number of fellows one-third are required to be in holy orders; if at any election less than one-third of the fellows are in holy orders, and if this has been the case for six months previous to the election, no person can be elected fellow who is not in holy orders. Regulations fundamentally similar are in force at nine other Cambridge colleges, and at fourteen of the colleges at Oxford. In some cases one-third of the fellowships, in others half, in others two-thirds, or even more, are confined to the clergy of the Established Church. It is needless for me to say a word on the injury that these regulations continue to inflict not only upon Nonconformists, but also upon the lay members of the Church of England. The growing disinclination among men of high university distinction to enter the clerical profession, is a matter of notoriety. Even under the old exclusive system, the statutory number of lay fellows was habitually

reached; and at Oxford especially, it was well known that the colleges had to be frequently content with very inferior candidates when the condition of holy orders was imposed. (Hear, hear.) When Lord Rosebery called attention to this in the House of Lords, the Marquis of Salisbury thought it becoming to taunt him with having drawn his statement from the vulgar gossip of the college scouts. At the time when the Marquis of Salisbury indulged in this unworthy insult, he had before him the evidence of one of the most distinguished members of the University of Oxford, Mr. C. S. Roundell, who had stated the same fact on the authority of his own repeated experience. In my own year at Cambridge, the first-class of the classical tripos included the names of 18 graduates. Of these I know that 13 decline to enter holy orders, and I believe the same to be the case with three of the remaining five. The influx of Dissenters of course increases the competition for the fellowships whose tenure is not trammelled; and in the 24 colleges that fall into the class of which I am speaking, the retention of the clerical test practically means that all but the clergy of the Established Church are to be excluded from nearly one-half of the crowning prizes of a student's life. The exact numbers are—181 fellowships confined to clergymen of the Established Church, 199 open to unrestricted competition. It must further be borne in mind that, while a layman cannot possibly hold a clerical fellowship, in the vast majority of instances there is nothing to prevent the tenure of an open fellowship by a clergyman. It follows, then, while 380 fellowships are offered in the four-and-twenty colleges to a small minority of students, hardly 200 are open to the competition of the great majority. (Hear, hear.) The unfairness of the working of the present system comes out still more plainly when we consider what it is which gives its value to a fellowship. The position of a fellow is one of emolument, but it is also one of high distinction. In the case of those who have been hitherto excluded it is not the loss of £200 or £300 a year which they feel the most keenly; it is that after a successful university career they have been refused the official recognition of their attainments. The hall-mark of scholarship has been denied them. (Hear, hear.) And this injustice, though lessened, is still continued. A fellowship ought to be regarded as

a sign of first-class scholarship. At present its acquirement means either that a man has taken first-class honours, or that, being a second, or even a third-rate man, he is willing to be ordained in the Church of England. (Laughter and applause.) It would not be one whit more absurd if the Goldsmiths' Company were to approve as gold of standard quality that which was either of 22 carats' fineness or manufactured by one privileged company. (Laughter.) Have I not a right to speak of religious inequalities in our national universities? And may we not justly claim that the rewards of merit shall be given wholly irrespective of ecclesiastical position as well as theological opinion? (Cheers.) A third class of colleges consists of those where it is provided, not that any definite proportion of the fellows should be in holy orders, but that all the fellows should be ordained after a certain number of years, unless they are actually holding some college office, or have held such office for at least ten years. This class is not so numerous as the preceding, but fifteen fellowships at Oxford and 139 at Cambridge are held upon this tenure. Now, here I confess that the laity have not such strong ground of complaint as in the former case. No one is excluded from a fair chance of a fellowship by his unwillingness to enter holy orders; and when a man has won his fellowship, he is able to hold it for eight or nine years, subject to no condition but the absurd one of celibacy. (Laughter.) In common, I believe, with all university reformers, I consider such a tenure enough, and more than enough, to be given purely as a prize for past achievements. But what I do wish to urge upon you very strongly is, that what is enough for one ought to be enough for all; that whether a man be a clergyman or whether he be a layman, it ought not to make the slightest difference to the value of the prize which he receives for intellectual attainments. (Hear, hear and applause.) At present, in Trinity and St. John's, in Christ's, in Queens', and in Exeter, the college authorities declare to a student that, provided he attains a certain standard of excellence, he shall receive an annuity for eight or nine years if he remains a layman, for life if he becomes a clergyman, supposing always he remains unmarried. It might be supposed that this provision was intended to retain the government of the colleges in the hands of the clergy; and I

cannot doubt that this was the purpose originally had in view. But because of the necessity of retaining for the colleges the services of distinguished tutors and lecturers who might decline to "resort to orders" (as the current phrase is), this regulation was relaxed in the case of resident working fellows. And thus it is now perfectly possible, although for several reasons very improbable, that the majority of the governing body in the case of the colleges I have mentioned should consist of laymen, or even of Nonconformists. As a measure of security to the Church this regulation is useless; it is efficacious as a measure of providing increased privilege and emolument for the clergy. But when it was proposed to abolish clerical fellowships Mr. Gladstone resisted the proposal; and the ground he took was this: It is inexpedient that sinecure fellowships should be tenable for life, but of great importance that vacancies should frequently occur for the benefit of the younger graduates. Now the prohibition of marriage and the requirement of holy orders do effectually tend to shorten the tenure of fellowships and produce more numerous vacancies; people will get married and won't take orders, whether they retain their fellowships or not. (Laughter.) And, therefore, in spite of the remonstrances of almost the whole of the Liberal party, these conditions were retained. Now let us apply this reasoning to another question of great importance, which was under the consideration of the Government at the very same time. It is admitted that it is of much importance for the inferior officers of the army and navy that there should be a rapid flow of promotion. The purchase of commissions effected this after a certain fashion, though most unsatisfactorily. But what is to be done now that the purchase is abolished? A simple and easy regulation will solve the difficulty. Let it be enacted that every colonel in the army, every post captain in the navy, shall be required, after seven years' service, to take the temperance pledge under pain of losing his commission. (Laughter.) A large proportion will doubtless refuse to do so, and thus vacancies will be caused, promotion will be accelerated, and all Mr. Cardwell's difficulties will have vanished. You may ask—What in the world has the temperance pledge to do with the fitness of military or naval officers to retain their commissions? I ask in return, what in the

world has ordination in the Established Church to do with the duties of a sinecure non-resident fellowship? (Loud applause.) I protest, that such a regulation would not be one whit more unfair, absurd, and ridiculous in the one case than in the other. Admitting to the full the evil of a life-long tenure of a sinecure fellowship, we claim that an impartial system of compulsory retirement should be substituted for an expedient which is at once unjust to the vast majority of the community and utterly useless to check the grossest cases of abuse. But another argument in defence of clerical fellowships deserves a moment's consideration; I think it need not trouble us longer. It is said that a large portion of the property of the colleges consists of the advowsons of livings; and that these may be properly filled, it is expedient that the fellows of the colleges shall be themselves qualified to hold them. Now, if we look to the highest interests of the parishioners, it cannot be doubted that they are greatly wronged by a system which puts the strongest pressure on a man to enter the work of the Christian ministry, however little he may feel himself fitted for it. (Hear, hear.) In appointing to a living, the college has no power of selection; the benefice is offered, first to the senior fellow on the list—if he declines it, to the second, and so on in regular rotation until it is accepted. There must be of necessity occasional instances of most unsuitable appointments; but where the college has felt itself constrained to protest against the senior claimant, it has not ventured to refuse to grant the nomination, for fear of legal proceedings. The cases are far more numerous where the incumbent of a college living is a man of unblemished character, but unhappily devoid of the quick sympathies and lofty inspirations that are needful for the Christian minister. As regards the colleges, the livings which they hold are justly regarded as very valuable means of pensioning those who have done good service in their earlier days. As long as the great majority of the college tutors and lecturers was composed of clergymen, this mode of assigning retiring allowances worked with a certain rude and imperfect kind of justice. But now that laymen are asserting with success their right to a full and proportionate share of the higher education of the country, this method is out of date. It provides an extravagant proportion of retiring pensions for those of the college

officers who belong to the clergy of a section of the nation; it furnishes none whatever for any who stand outside this favoured number. The value of the patronage in the hands of the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge is something enormous. At Cambridge the total annual income of the livings to which colleges present is stated by the official calendar at £128,000, and this is confessedly an under estimate. At Oxford, the value is reckoned by Mr. Lyulph Stanley at £200,000 per annum. And it is to be further noticed that the operation of this system of patronage is harmful in a way which does not lie on the surface. Livings will be constantly falling vacant to which only clerical fellows will be eligible; the acceptance of a living will in each case throw open another fellowship to restricted clerical competition, and the striking disproportion between the chances of a clergyman and a layman will be yet further increased. In presence of facts like these, we cannot wonder that university reformers have cast a longing eye upon the vast revenues of the college livings. The colleges have ceased to be corporations of Churchmen; when a similar change passed over the municipal corporations it was provided by statute that the advowsons in municipal patronage should be disposed of, and the proceeds devoted to the general purposes of the boroughs. Why, it has been asked with no little force, should not a similar course be sanctioned in the case of the colleges? (Applause.) The sale of the advowsons, according to Mr. Stanley's calculations, would produce a sum little, if at all, short of £2,000,000 sterling, that is to say, of £80,000 per annum. This would supply abundantly all the retiring pensions needed for superannuated tutors and lecturers, lay and clerical alike, and would probably leave a handsome surplus for other educational purposes. It is not easy to find any valid objection to the equity of proposals such as these. And yet I do not think that they are likely to find much acceptance from English Nonconformists. The sale of the cure of souls is fully recognised by the law of the Established Church, and one of the most vigorous defenders of the Establishment has of late been taking great pains to show, in opposition to the loved and honoured Bishop of this diocese, that livings must be matters of open auction, so long as the Church is connected with the State. I believe it. But Nonconformists have ever

protested against the scandal and the shame. (Hear, hear.) And rather than soil their fingers with the money that is gained by traffic in the souls of men, they will be willing to endure the inequalities that arise from a system of college patronage. (Applause.) For the evil is not likely to be of long endurance. (Hear, hear.) In the approaching disestablishment of the English Church—(loud applause)—compensation will of course be given to all the holders of advowsons; and the sums of money that the colleges will receive in lieu of their rights of patronage will be at their free disposal, to promote in some more equitable fashion the interest of national education. Closely connected with the system of clerical fellowships is that of clerical headships. Of the 42 headships of Oxford and Cambridge no less than 30 are of necessity confined to the clergy, and of the twelve that are nominally open the conditions of election are in several cases such that the election of a layman is practically impossible. The majority of the House of Peers were not content with the security thus provided for the predominance of ecclesiastics. On the motion of the Marquis of Salisbury they added an amendment to the Bill enacting that the headships of colleges and halls should be open only to members of the Church of England. The Earl of Kimberley, speaking as a member of the Cabinet, declared that such a provision could only be regarded as an insult to Dissenters, and would not fail to bring about a lasting agitation to remove it; and, in accordance with this reasonable view, the influence of the Government in the House of Commons was exerted successfully to procure the rejection of the Lords' amendment. But if it be an insult to Dissenters calling for vigorous agitation that the headships of the colleges and halls are confined to members of the Church of England, what are we to call it if more than two-thirds of them are limited to clergymen of that Church? This is no sentimental grievance; it is the deliberate re-assertion of a principle, against which we are gathered to protest, that the control of the education of the people, from the lowest to the highest, ought of right to be in the hands of the clergy of the State-Church. (Cheers.) The head of the college has, it is true, little to do with the actual work of education, but he has, to a large extent, the control of it. He appoints the tutors and lecturers, or has an im-

portant share in their appointment, and in a hundred ways exercises a very considerable influence. We do not grudge that this position and influence should be given to a Churchman, or even to a clergyman. But we do protest against the *a priori* assumption that such a one is of necessity the man best qualified for the post; and we claim that the electors should have full power to use the best of their judgment in selecting clergymen or laymen, Churchman or Nonconformist, according to the requirements of the case. The direct results of the concession of equality would be little or nothing; it might be generations before a Nonconformist layman should be master of Balliol or Trinity. But what we have been aiming at is that the higher education of the nation shall be lifted altogether out of the lower region of petty sectarian jealousies and restrictions. (Cheers.) A measure was proposed to give them this character, which, it was hoped, would have this effect. After repeated failures, every failure involving new injustice, it was carried at last; and what do we find is the result? In 13 out of the 36 colleges the Government is given over absolutely to the clergy of a diminishing section of the nation. The clerical head and clerical fellows must of necessity form a majority of the governing body. And in several of the remaining colleges such strong inducements are offered to the fellows to receive ordination that, though there is no necessity, there is the greatest probability that here, too, they will be so numerous as to have the power entirely in their own hands. (Hear, hear.) I may remind you, further, that in many of the colleges an additional strength will be given to the clerical element by the support of the visitor. In four of the Cambridge colleges the visitor is a bishop, in four more he is of necessity in holy orders. At Oxford, no less than 15 colleges are under episcopal control. The powers of the visitor vary greatly in different cases, but in many instances he has an absolute veto on any change in the college statutes. His decision is final and without appeal in any question of the disputed meaning of an ordinance; and he is guided in giving his decision by no rule but that of his episcopal conscience. In what direction that conscience is likely to lead him is shown by the explicit declaration of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, that he regarded himself as the guardian of the

interests of the Church; and need I say that "the interests of the Church" in such a connection are likely to be identified with the dominance of the clergy? Since the date for which the meeting of this Conference was originally fixed, a very important decision has been made by the highest judicial authority. After lengthened litigation, it has been decided that in 18 of the Oxford colleges the majority of the fellows, with the approval of the Privy Council, have the power to alter the college statutes, in spite of the veto of the visitor; and this power has been exercised by two of them to remove clerical restrictions. This is a very important step in advance, but it does not free us from the duty of urging their entire abolition. In a question of national importance the decision ought not to be left in the hands of a small and irresponsible body, who, in the majority of cases, may be expected to be hostile to reform. It is either just or unjust that the special privileges of the clergy should be abolished; in neither case ought their retention to depend on the accident of the wishes of the bare majority of the present fellows. (Cheers.) I will only add, in conclusion, what I conceive should be the demand of the friends of religious equality with regard to the universities. The precedent which we have to follow has been supplied to us by Mr. W. E. Forster in the seventeenth clause of the Endowed Schools Act. It is there enacted that in every scheme, with certain exceptions, relating to any educational endowment, the Commissioners shall provide that the religious opinions of any person, or his attendance or non-attendance at any particular form of religious worship, shall not in any way affect his qualifications for being one of the governing body of such endowment. And this is what we have a right to claim in the case of the endowments for the higher education of the nation—(applause)—*mutatis mutandis*. One of the *mutanda* certainly must be the manner in which the provisions of an Act of Parliament are carried out by those who are charged wih its execution. (Applause.) Our claims are not exorbitant. An overwhelming majority of the Liberal party in the House of Commons has voted that they should be granted; and we cannot long endure that religious equality should be denied us simply and solely by the action of the Government whose primary claim on our allegiance was that in a crucial

instance it pledged itself at every hazard to secure it. (Loud applause.)

Mr. J. HEYWOOD said: First of all, I wish to express the great pleasure I have in seeing Mr. Miall at the head of this influential meeting of the Nonconformists of Great Britain. When he and I were members of the House of Commons together many years ago we acted with great cordiality, and I am rejoiced to see the distinguished place which he now holds in our meeting. I will read you the resolution put into my hands, and which I propose:

"That the Conference pledges itself to support by all means in its power the measure to be submitted to Parliament next Session for the removal of the restrictions which confine many fellowships and headships of colleges to persons in or intending to take holy orders, and which confine other offices and emoluments connected with the universities and colleges to members of the Church of England; and is of opinion that no settlement of the question at issue with regard to national universities can be regarded as final and satisfactory which does not include the repeal of the restrictions requiring college authorities to provide religious instruction for members of the Church of England, and to cause the services of the Church of England to be read in the college chapels, and the transfer to the Crown of the visitatorial powers now held *ex-officio* by bishops of the Church of England."

There are several points in it; but before I allude to them, I wish to express my gratitude and the gratitude of all university reformers to Earl Russell, when as Lord John Russell he was Prime Minister. In the year 1850 he declared in the House of Commons his intention to advise the Crown to issue a commission of inquiry into the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. I had moved on the subject myself, and he said if Mr. Heywood would withdraw his motion, he would undertake himself to recommend this commission, and of course I acceded and withdrew it. It was understood at that time that the question of Dissenters was not to enter into the proceedings of the commission. Lord John Russell went as far as he could in the year 1850, and the point on which he principally grounded his intended commission was the waste of power in the colleges and Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. I remember distinctly his words. The difficulty at that time was whether the House of Lords would not address the Crown against this commission. The old Duke of Wellington was alive then; he was the leader of the House of Lords; he was a very

sagacious old man. (Laughter.) I happened to be below the bar one day, and the Duke said he did not see any use in a university commission, but if there was to be a university commission, he was glad to find that it was to be on the principles of the Ecclesiastical Commission. I understood his words to mean this, that no Dissenter was to be allowed to be put on it. That was twenty-two years ago, and it required great moral courage to go so far as Lord John Russell did. The great body of the clergymen of the Church of England were against him. At a later time we came to legislate on this subject, and we carried resolutions to open matriculation at Oxford, and to open the degree of B.A. in that university. But the House of Lords were not satisfied, and they inserted a clause in the Act that the degree of B.A. was not to qualify any person for any office for which such a degree had been a qualification, and which had previously been held by members of the Church of England unless a Church of England test was signed. That is the second time the House of Lords comes in. The third time is much more recent, when the opening of fellowships and headships was considered, and the House of Lords took the trouble to appoint a committee to consider the subject. The committee sat a whole year, and in the end they inserted a Biblical test, which they thought would possibly go down with the public. The test was that a candidate for a professorship should declare that he would not say anything in his lectures against the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. The fact was, the public did not want any test at all. We were getting rid of the Thirty-nine Articles, and of the test of liturgical conformisty, and we wanted no other test whatever. (Hear, hear.) My time, I find, has nearly expired. and I can only say that I believe the present position of the House of Lords is that of stopping religious freedom. My own opinion is that we ought to have Peers for life, and we ought to have Nonconformists represented in the House of Lords. (Hear, hear.) I should be glad to see my friend Mr. Miall as one of the peers. (Laughter, cheers, and cries of "No, no.") I want that our opinions should be stated by some of ourselves. As the poet says, "Speak for yourself, John." (Much laughter.) I can only say I have great confidence in the loyalty of Mr. Gladstone to the Liberal party, and I think we ought to make allowance

for him. I am not for turning the Government out. I would scold them, and find fault with them. (Laughter.) I would tell him that they must traverse the helm, and alter the line of their policy. (Hear, hear.) But I do think we ought to act loyally towards them. I am sure you will agree to this resolution. It is merely an expression of our opinion that the Established Church should not rule everything at Oxford and Cambridge, and that the Crown should be the visitor of the colleges. The Crown, in this case, would mean, I should think, the Minister of Public Instruction; and my idea is that, some day or other, the Vice-President of Council for the time being will fill that office. Such a minister will have power to inquire into educational bodies; he will report to Parliament on the subject, and then when the information is before Parliament legislative action can be taken. (Cheers.)

Mr. NEVILLE GOODMAN, M.A.: I am aware that I am addressing ladies and gentlemen placed in an invidious position by the mistaken action of the State in religious matters, therefore ladies and gentlemen who have their insight into the relations of religion and politics preternaturally acute; so that here, if anywhere, I might assume that you know all about the religious disabilities at the universities. After the lucid statement of my friend Mr. Wilkins, you cannot be ignorant of them. But please remember that you are a representative assembly, and you have a duty to do in regard to those whom you represent. (Hear, hear.) Please remember that it has long been the policy of the universities to denationalise those institutions. Not only did they reserve their benefits for the adherents of the one dominant creed, but they also succeeded in reserving those benefits for one class of the community—the nobility and gentry of this realm. I speak without fear of contradiction, when I say that at the commencement of this century, so debased, under the management of the Church of England and the clergy of the Church of England, had the universities become, that it seemed to be their policy to allow a young nobleman or any man who could spend five or six hundred a year for three consecutive years to have placed upon him the stamp of learning without its substance, while they denied to any poor man that privilege unless he happened to be a man of such superlatively scholarly attainments that they could wear

him as a feather in their plume; and then he came to them by patronage from public schools which were then exclusive institutions. And so far had they succeeded in this policy, that they had absolutely produced the paradoxical result that half a million a year was so administered as to render Cambridge and Oxford the most expensive places of education to be found in the world. That policy was so pursued that they absolutely made the learning which they furnished as conventional, as archaic, as unpractical as possible; as far removed from the world of commerce and social life as possible. That policy has been reversed, and men are now endeavouring by forced marches to place themselves at the van of the intellectual progress of the day, yet it was pursued with such vigour that we are now reaping the fruits of what we then sowed; and standing here in Lancashire, in this great heart of commerce whose auricle is yonder at Liverpool, and whose ventricle is here, and whose constant pulsations are felt in every port throughout all the Continents—in the midst of this centre of wealth and industry, not one parent out of a thousand ever thinks of Cambridge or Oxford as a fitting place for his son to be furnished for the business or armed for the battle of life. (Cheers.) Religious disabilities, therefore, are not known much about, and nine out of every ten that you meet imagine that Nonconformists now have at the universities a fair field and no favour, that tests are abolished, that the university is freed from all its religious trammels. All that is perfectly false, as you now know. When you meet gentlemen who entertain these delusive ideas, I hope you will take into your lips the well-known words of Sir John Coleridge, and say, Would you be surprised to learn—(laughter)—that Nonconformists are debarred from nearly half the fellowships and nearly two-thirds of the headships by a barrier which is higher and stronger than any that you have thrown down? Would you be surprised to learn that, while you thought that you had abolished all tests, there remains behind a test more detestable than any thing else? Would you be surprised to learn that the colleges, and through them the universities, are at the present moment hopelessly and helplessly delivered over to the domination of the Anglican clergy for an unlimited period? Yet all that is perfectly true. Now, I will come to the

practical question. The Liberal party does not want to be shown that these clerical fellowships ought to be abolished. The Government itself, by the mouthpiece of Mr. Gladstone, said that they were discontented with the conditions under which fellowships were held, and in his expressive words he said, "This question ought not to be let to sleep." But in the hush that succeeded the conflict the question is beginning to sleep, rocked by the cradle of the Royal Commission. Now, I do not say a word against clergymen as such. I honour their sacred office, and fully sympathise with Cowper when he writes—

> "The pulpit—and I name it, filled
> With solemn awe, which bids me well beware
> With what intent I touch that sacred thing."

But please remember that the holders of these clerical fellowships are priests without pulpits; they are gentlemen who are "called" in order that they may neglect their call. (Cheers.) Put yourselves in imagination, for a moment, in the position of a Fellow of St. John's or of Trinity College, Cambridge, who, at the end of seven years, for his M.A. degree has this alternative put before him —to enter the priesthood or to be given over to poverty. How shall I describe it? It is not a comedy, and yet it was never better described than in the homely and quaint language of Launcelot Gobbo. If you remember, he has a discussion with the fiend in his own conscience. In this case there is a little difference. It is the conscience which says, Run! fly! Fly from the luxuries of college halls; fly from the sweet converse of combination rooms; fly from the luxury and ease, now become habitual, which has grown up around you in the delightful atmosphere of Cambridge. But the fiend says, No, stay. Budge, says conscience. Budge not, says the fiend. And honest Launcelot, good Gobbo, the academic Gobbo, is not equal to the occasion, as his predecessor was not; and he says to himself, "I find that conscience is a hard conscience, that it gives me such counsel. Fiend, thou givest me the more friendly counsel—I will not budge." (Laughter.) But there is a more serious side to this question. This morning I looked over the ordination service with which deacons and priests are inducted, and I thought to have placed before you the solemn protest made by the bishops, the solemn call which he presents to them, the

solemn words taken upon the lips of the recipients; but I have given that up, for I found that in denouncing a blasphemy so profound I must become myself blasphemous. (Hear, hear.) I feel strongly upon this subject, but not more strongly than I believe, and I say that I believe the arch enemy of souls could not devise a better scheme for lowering the standard of morality in the nation and for making religion contemptible in the eyes of a sensitive and chivalrous yonth such as you send every year to the university. It is such a scheme as

> "From the body of contraction plucks
> The very soul, and sweet religion makes
> A rhapsody of words."

(Loud applause.)

Professor MASSIE: Ladies and gentlemen, we are told that a very serious catastrophe is about to befal the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, a catastrophe social, political, and religious, a catastrophe which will so far turn the world upside down, that, according to the dismal forebodings of Professor Rawlinson's prophetic soul, there will be no possibility of distinguishing between a Churchman and a Dissenter. (Laughter.) But we are often told that history repeats itself, and we may take some consolation to ourselves in the midst of our alarm if we reflect that a state of society which did not disintegrate the body politic before 1662, may occur again, perhaps, without any very disastrous consequences. But I may be allowed on my own part, with some sadness, to felicitate Professor Rawlinson that the springs of his comfort may not so soon be dried up, and that perhaps he may yet have peace in his time; for I am not so sanguine as he is that, though the name of a Dissenter be blotted out, none of the stigma will yet remain. That is not effaced by the change of a word. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children; and so deep-seated is the disease with which the national establishment of religion has tainted the national constitution, that it will be a long time before it is effectually cured; perhaps the scar may never altogether disappear. The effacing of this in the universities has begun, but it is and must be a slow process. It has not been secured by the partial and unsatisfactory abolition of tests. So long as clerical fellowships absorb by far the greater number of

the prizes of learning, so long as the professorships of theology must necessarily be confined to members of the Church of England, so long as the service of the Church of England is the service of the chapels of those colleges, that is, in fact, so long as the Church of England continues established, it will not be difficult, to the joy of Professor Rawlinson, to distinguish between a Churchman and a Dissenter. And even when the Church of England is past and gone it will leave behind it in the Universities an unmistakable trail. (Laughter.) But it is the duty of this nation to make that trail so indistinct that it shall become as nearly as possible invisible. As one means to this end—and I think we are wise to be content with one thing at a time—we seek that the test for clerical fellowships be abolished. Among many reasons, we seek it for the sake of the colleges themselves. It will help to liberate them from clerical patronage and control. It is a long time since the clergy were the only educated people, and it is some ages since the "benefit of clergy" was any benefit at all. (Laughter.) And we may be allowed to consider it questionable whether that is a benefit of clergy which gives them the practical control over university education. We, non-sacerdotalists as we are, know full well that, though our ministers, in consequence of the education of circumstances, and for other reasons more honourable to themselves, are generally wide in their views, sometimes wide enough, in all conscience—a judicious admixture of the lay element in our councils is in many respects beneficial. If so, how much more at the universities where the spirit of exclusiveness, which is somehow or other begotten of university life, is intensified by clerical prejudice! I am not aware that the clergy are the best educational governors, even in the case of endowed schools, and I would recommend to the notice of Mr. R. W. Dale, if he is not just now afflicted with endowed schools on the brain—(laughter)—a body of governors who are all *ex-officio* and nearly all clergymen. But we seek it not only for the sake of the colleges, but also for the sake of the victims of that test. It is surely a cruel, an unrighteous, and an unholy thing that a man should be tempted by a bribe to persuade himself that he has the inward call of the Holy Ghost to minister to the spiritual wants of the nation.

Pious founders, whoever they may be, did not leave their money that self-delusion and blasphemy might flourish, and the Church of England does not know how much she loses by offering a temptation for such a fearful perversion of conscience. But it is not merely a university matter; we seek it for the sake of the national morality. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and if a foul leaven of immorality be working at the centres of education, what man will take upon himself to draw the line circumscribing the corruption that shall follow, and say, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further?" For it is very true that religious equality is a safeguard of the national morality; and university reform can never be complete, the national morality will from this source have great cause of danger, until that final fortress of religious inequality, the Established Church, shall be wholly swept away. The nobler spirits of the universities and of the Church are fighting from within; we must agitate from without. It will not take long to batter down walls that are assailed from both sides. I am sure that we are most of us, if not all, heartily tired of the struggle for religious equality—(no, no)—a struggle bequeathed to us through a long line of our forefathers—a struggle which, perchance, we may have to bequeath to a future generation—(no, no)—a struggle which has the effect of making us enemies outwardly of those with whom we would fain be at one. Sisyphus was a liar, a cheat, and, if report be true, not a very reputable character. He was condemned by Jove to roll a stone up the face of a mountain, and, when his hopes seemed to be ripening into fulfilment, to see it roll provokingly down again. What have Nonconformists done that they should have been made the Sisyphi of the English nation, and that the Jove of religious monopoly should have decreed to them an everlasting toil? It will be a good thing for England if, in prospect of the dangers which seem to be hanging over her, she puts away from the midst of her this apple of discord, that with united front we may face the problems of the future. (Applause.)

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY: Ladies and gentlemen, I should like just to say one or two practical words upon this question before we conclude. I put aside all generalities that we are all agreed upon. I think it has escaped the notice of this conference that by a side

wind a great deal has been done, and is likely to be done almost immediately, for abolishing clerical fellowships. There has long been a doubt as to the interpretation of the old University Reform Act,—whether in altering the college ordinances the visitor had a voice or not, but it has recently been decided in the case of Merton College that his consent is not necessary, and consequently that college has abolished all clerical restrictions, and I have no doubt that that example will be followed shortly in at least five or six Oxford colleges, and by degrees that will spread. But there is one matter of obstruction which the colleges cannot deal with by themselves, and that is episcopal visitation. Now the episcopal visitor is far more serious in many respects than the clerical fellow, for he is an integral member of the government of the college. His approval is necessary to every change. A fellow may be outvoted, but a visitor stands alone and can veto any matter. It is therefore very necessary to keep before the minds of the people of England the necessity of undenominationalising one of the essential offices of the government of the colleges. I do not know that I care to go quite so far as the resolution, and to say that the visitor must be the Crown. It is important to us that the visitor shall not be a dignitary of any particular church, but I think you are going a little too much into detail to say at the present moment who shall be the visitor. Hitherto, of course, we have inherited visitors from the old days when colleges were not free from union with a particular church, and in my college we have at this moment a bishop as visitor, but I have not the slightest doubt that in the event of another election the college would choose some eminent lawyer or judge who is most fitted to decide on judicial questions. You must bear this clearly in mind, that you have the most keen auxiliaries as a rule in almost all the colleges, and where it rests with the colleges themselves, you may be sure that they will go ahead even of your wishes in opening and nationalising the universities. (Hear, hear.) But to pass to another matter, I do not agree with the speaker who had a little hit at Mr. Gladstone for his commission to inquire into the revenues of the universities. That does not in the least stand in the way of other reforms, and is a most useful measure; but I do regret that Mr. Glad-

stone has not made the commission a little more extensive. I have looked at the commission carefully, and it only extends to the colleges and the universities and the property which they hold, whether for themselves or in trust. Now in speaking to a Lancashire audience, I need hardly remind you of the important trust called the Hulme Trust, which is not held by the college, although in connection with it. Mr. Gladstone's commission entirely passes by such a charity as that, but I say the commission ought to have been so framed that property of all kinds held by the colleges or universities, or in connection with them, should have been brought within its province. (Hear, hear.) I say it with regard to the Hulme Trust especially, because I believe that whereas in the beginning it had no requirement of church membership for its trustees, so recently as this century that requirement of church membership was inserted, and while by the University Act of this Session you have all the other endowments of the University thrown open, you have this Hulme Trust at this very moment perpetuating that restriction. Now, do not forget that there are such endowments as these that need looking into. Of course we shall very soon have, I suppose, an executive commission, which will reform the colleges with their assistance, after these financial questions have been settled, and I do not think we need be very much vexed at waiting a year or two, for every year that we have waited has strengthened the progressive party in the universities. (Applause.) Everything that has to be carried will have to be carried with the concurrence of the colleges, and we have got so much, that though of course the thorough principle of religious equality has not been carried out in every detail, we shall get all we want in a little while, for the thing is growing with the utmost rapidity. (Applause.) I made a suggestion once in a pamphlet of my own which has been referred to with reference to college livings. Those livings amount to a very large revenue indeed, but I do not quite agree with the statement that the fellows who receive the livings make bad clergymen. I am inclined to think that if you compare the college patronage with the patronage of bishops or ministers, much more if you compare it with private patronage, it compares very favourably. It is for the sake of the colleges themselves I object to it. I object to anything

which creates a bias in the mind of any particular man to turn to one profession rather than another, or which creates a practical restriction in favour of a particular church. In the case of Trinity College, Dublin, those livings were treated as a valuable property; and in the disestablishment of the Church, Trinity College was to receive compensation. It would be a great waste of public property to throw away that revenue, and I think the proper thing would be—not to do as Lord Westbury did in his act, and sell them to private patrons—but for the Government to deal reasonably and fairly with the universities and colleges, and buy from them at the expense of the nation the livings which they have, and then you would have that large amount of livings already public property. It would then not be a difficulty to be dealt with in the other question of the disestablishment of the Church of England. Of course I do not say that the universities or colleges should stand out for the full market value; it would be a matter for compromise, but they should have a handsome sum to be applied to university purposes, and thus the nation would make a step in advance towards acquiring complete control over the revenues of the Church, in case it should desire to disestablish it afterwards. (Applause.)

Rev. C. E. B. REED, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge: If Mr. Wilkins' paper had been exhaustive of the whole subject of our position and claims at the Universities, I would not have ventured to say the few words which I propose to add; but nothing has been said about degrees in divinity, and it appears to me that this Conference ought not to separate without making a distinct utterance to the effect that among the other changes which it requires, it does require and insist that degrees in divinity no longer be restricted to members of one denomination. (Applause.) And this is the more important because Mr. Stevenson, the member for South Shields, has already brought forward this subject in the House of Commons, and been defeated only by a narrow majority. If we give him the assurance of our support, and show the Government that we do not consider this a small matter, I think it may somewhat tend to the overthrow of this monopoly. At present the qualifications for the degrees of B.D. and D.D. are such as can only be fulfilled by members of the Establishment. After a certain

time has elapsed from the date of his M.A. degree, a man can by performance of certain exercises obtain a divinity degree, and one of the exercises for both degrees is "an English sermon," which cannot be delivered by a Nonconformist in an Anglican Church. Now so long as that condition stands, it is not likely that a Nonconformist can obtain these degrees, though he may pass the other parts of the examination as well as a member of the Established Church. Any Nonconformist can "keep an Act," compose a Latin Thesis, and sustain an argument in its defence; and it appears to me that we ought to assert our opinion that, if the universities are considered national property, we will not have divinity degrees, any more than the degrees of B.A. and M.A., restricted to those who are able to conform to certain ecclesiastical forms. There is only one other point, and that is that it is understood that Mr. Fawcett has given an undertaking that, in case no Bill for the removal of clerical fellowships be brought in by the Government, he will himself during the coming Session bring in a Bill for that purpose. (Applause)

Mr. R. W. DALE: I wish to call the attention of the Conference to two points. The resolution pledges the Conference to the support, by all means in its power, of a measure to be submitted to Parliament next session for the removal of the restrictions which confine many fellowships and headships of colleges to persons in, or intending to be in, holy orders. The intention of the framers of the resolution was to invite the members of this Conference to give their utmost support to Mr. Fawcett's measure when it is laid on the table of the House of Commons next session. I earnestly trust that the Conference will not commit itself to any opinion with regard to divinity degrees. In the opinion of some of us the national universities ought not to confer degrees in divinity at all. (Applause.) If those degrees are conferred, of course, we all believe that they should be open to men of every church, and should simply imply competent knowledge in what is commonly understood as theological learning, which may be possessed by men of every variety of faith; but if we admit Mr. Reed's suggestion we should imply that we believe it is the function of the national universities to confer degrees in divinity. We are not altogether agreed about that, and I trust, therefore, that

that addition to the resolution will not be insisted upon. (Applause.)

Rev H. W. CROSSKEY: Since the propriety of the transfer of visitatoral powers to the Crown appears questionable to some members of the Conference, the Secretaries propose that the last clause of the resolution should stand thus: "And the withdrawal of the visitatorial powers now held *ex-officio* by bishops of the Church of England." With this alteration the motion was unanimously agreed to.

Professor SHELDON AMOS read the following paper on

ENDOWED SCHOOLS AND THE CLAIMS OF NONCONFORMISTS.

In approaching the topic of the reconstruction of Endowed Schools there are two problems which must be faced on the very threshold of the inquiry. The one concerns the limits of respect due to the intention of Founders; the other concerns the claims of an Established Church. In this place it is neither possible nor necessary to attempt a solution of these two problems. For all those to whom this paper is mainly addressed a satisfactory solution has been already reached. Recent legislation has clearly intimated that this solution is acquiesced in by the Legislature, though the complete practical consequences have been as yet only feebly and hesitatingly deduced and applied. The Irish Church Act, the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, the Universities Tests Act of the past year, are only justifiable and intelligible on the assumptions that there is a very definite limit, in the eye of the State, to the respect due to the intention of Founders, and that the claims of an Established Church, or of any religious society aspiring to occupy such a position, are henceforth relegated from the nebulous region of indefeasible right to the more vulgar, but less impracticable, arena of political expediency. Nevertheless, in order to clear the way for the free discussion of the particular topic under consideration, it is necessary to interpose a few preliminary remarks both as to the notion of respect due to the intention of Founders and as to the asserted claims of an Established Church.

I. The ground for respecting the intention of Founders must be either that the State conceives itself to have made an engagement of the nature of a contract with the dead Founder to carry

out his intentions to the end of time; or that not to carry out the intention of past Founders would operate as a great discouragement to such persons as might be disposed to become Founders in future time. As to the last ground, it may well be doubted whether it be an evil to discourage such Founders as those whose only conception of patriotism and philanthrophy is that of stamping for ever their own puny personality and prejudices on institutions to endure for all time; of nursing a profound distrust of the public wisdom and justice of all future generations; and of doing their utmost to project their theories of social welfare into times and circumstances in which they can only operate as a national bane and sore. As to the ground of respecting the intention of Founders to be discovered in a latent engagement or contract, this ground cannot be more solid and stable than that upon which the most familiar rights of ownership are secured. These rights are grounded upon nothing else or better than a political conviction that the individual advantage of one is a means, more or less direct, of bringing about the common good of all. It is on behalf of this common good alone that property is allowed to be conveyed from owner to owner, and, upon the death of an owner, to be transferred to the person or persons nominated by will. Thereby is a more effective stimulus afforded to the love of accumulation, and an opportunity presented of providing for the moral claims of family dependents. If in any exceptional cases a larger testamentary power has been conceded than is necessary to these ends, it can only be that a larger measure of good to the public has been thought to be secured thereby. It might have been reasonable or wise to favour the devotion of property to public ends, and to conciliate Founders of Endowments by allowing them to suggest, if not to dictate, the special uses to which they would prefer their gift being applied. But no generation of law makers or law administrators could guarantee the perpetuity of a mode of applying an Endowment after such mode should be demonstrated to be injurious to the public good, or not conducive to that good in the highest possible degree, without such generation speaking falsely to the Founder and acting treacherously to their own successors. Thus the intentions of a Founder can only so far call for reverence as they demonstrably conduce to, or at the least are, consistent with the

highest good of the whole community. It may, indeed, be a perilous task for any particular age to undertake to declare what is for the good of all ages. But it may be less difficult to decide what is for the good of none. The devotion of proceeds annually increasing to the propagation of pauperism by a system of indiscriminate charity; the restriction of educational advantages to the narrowest range of objects, and to persons selected by the most corrupt and corrupting of methods; the assiduous inculcation of religious beliefs repudiated by more than half, or by an overwhelming majority of the nation,—these results are self-condemned as modes of employing endowments which any age is entitled to denounce as treacherous to the welfare of a permanent state.

II. The claims of the community as a whole introduce the second topic involved in that of the reconstruction of Endowments, the claims of an Established Church. Some of the Endowed Schools of this country—as St. Paul's, London,—were founded not later than the first decade of the sixteenth century, and before the complex series of events usually described as the Reformation. The Established Church was still Catholic in every sense of the term. A vast number of the Endowed Schools were founded during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., when the only church contemplated by the founders was the Reformed Church of England. The founders of these schools in some cases indicated their wish, with greater or less precision, and in all cases assumed that the children in their schools should be trained in the tenets which, in their day, were alone recognised as truly Christian, and as comformable to the requisitions of the policy of the State. To carry out in the present day, with any degree of universality and honesty, the actual intentions of founders, the religion now taught in certain Endowed Schools ought to be Catholic, in others the mongrel creed produced and reproduced by the vicissitudes of Henry VIII.'s mind and passions, and in others the fluctuating creed of the Church of England as patronised by the successively ascendant politicians of the time of Edward VI.

So long as the Church to which a founder was personally attached continued to be the preponderant Christian society in the country, so long his wishes and the public convenience ran parallel together. But a time came when the authority and

exclusive merits of the Church of England were repudiated, first by a considerable minority, and then by an influential moiety of the English people. It was only by the loyal support of this large section of the community that the life of the nation and the order, security, liberty, and rights of property, which that life presupposed, could be maintained. It was from this section of the community, as much as from any other, that the law-making power drew all its authority and strength, and it was only in the name of the highest good of the community, as a whole, that a single law could be made or a single institution be supported. The conclusion was rapid as it was inexorable, that law could henceforth only lend its force to uphold testamentary dispositions so far as their operation did not conflict with the equal justice claimed by all sections of the community. In a word, the argument was complete, without an absent link, that the only possible ground on which an endowment could be rescued from instant confiscation by the State, was that of carrying out so much only of the founder's intentions as was not incompatible with ends from time to time recognised as desirable by the great bulk of the community.

It is now to be seen what has been the past policy of this country in relation to educational endowments; what has been the most recent policy; and in what ways the carrying out of this last requires to be jealously watched, in order to secure the full benefits being reaped to the uttermost.

In the case of every Endowed School, four main questions present themselves, as bearing directly on its religious or ecclesiastical character:—First, what must be the religious faith of the trustees or governors; secondly, what must be the faith of the master; thirdly, what must be the faith, if any, taught in the course of the ordinary instruction given in the school; and, fourthly, what must be the faith of the pupils, their parents, or their guardians as a condition precedent to admission to the school.

As to the faith of the trustees, the law, as applicable to any school founded within the Reformation period, and the trust-deeds of which contain no more definite description of the creed to be inculcated than what can be gathered from the loose expressions

"teaching of literature and godly learning," or "godly learning and knowledge," was settled in the case of Baker *v.* Lee, known as the Ilminster case. In this case, for the 156 years immediately preceding the suit, Nonconformists had been admitted to the trust as well as Churchmen, a selection which was the more plausible as the surplus of the trust funds was to go to general parish purposes, such as the repair of the highways. Nevertheless, the House of Lords (though the Lords present were equally divided) affirmed the ruling of the Lords Justices, who had reversed that of the Master of the Rolls. The law was settled to be, in the words of Lord Wensleydale, "That where the intention of the founder was to provide for the religious instruction of the scholars, it must be taken to be *primâ facie* according to the doctrine of the Church of England, and that the Trustees to be appointed, in the full exercise of the discretion of the Court of Chancery, ought to be members of that Church." In Sir R. Palmer's argument before the House of Lords will be found a curious historical specimen of the weight of the legal presumption asserted in times past in favour of the claims of the Church of England. The Chelmsford Grammar School case was a previous one, which demonstrated the same principle and was cited in support of the present decision.

But even these cases convey a most imperfect impression of the hardships inflicted by the law on Nonconformists. Referring to the notorious case of the Attorney-General *v.* Cullum, decided in 1843, the Charity Commissioners (Trevilson Charity, XVI. Report) state that "the original objects of the foundation were not "connected with any religious denomination. It was proposed to "apply the funds to education. The scheme was prepared very "much like that of the British and Foreign Society, but it was "rejected by the Court in favour of a Church system with special "exemptions, with the observation that the proposed scheme did "not provide for what the Judge could consider religious instruc- "tion at all, and, therefore, according to his previous remark, "*must be worse than a mockery.*"

Apart, then, from all novel legislation on the subject, such has long been the doctrine of English law as administered in the Court of Chancery. Of late years, however, legislation has,

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step by step, been making inroads on the application of this doctrine, and, indeed, for some purposes, upon the doctrine itself. The main epochs in the history of this legislation are marked by the passing of the Charitable Trusts Acts of 1853 and 1855, the Endowed Schools Act of 1860, and the Endowed Schools Act of 1869. The Charitable Trusts Acts of 1853 and 1855, though important as recognising the public right and duty of scrutinising severely the modes in which charitable trust funds are being employed, and as providing a new and tolerably efficient machinery for conducting such scrutiny and for remedying glaring abuses, yet introduced no change in the existing presumption of law as to the paramount claims of the Church of England. By the 22nd section of the Act of 1853 the Board of Commissioners appointed by the Act, might empower Trustees to remove any schoolmaster or other officer of any charity, subject to obtaining the consent of the visitor, if there were one, in writing. The Commissioners were also enabled, provisionally, to approve and certify such schemes for the reconstruction of charitable trusts as could only be carried into effect by the authority of Parliament. An annual report was to be laid before Parliament, setting forth the schemes approved by the Board, but no provision was made for their being recommended to or readily adopted by Parliament. The Charity Commissioners have over and over again insisted on the practical impotency of this part of the Act. Thus, under this Act, no concession whatever was made to the claims of Nonconformists, except so far as they were interested, in common with the rest of the community, in the remedy of gross abuses of trust.

The next stage in the history of this legislation is that marked by the Endowed Schools Act of 1860. By this Act the Trustees of Endowed Schools were entitled and required to make such rules as "would provide for admitting to the benefits of the school the "children of parents not in communion with the church, sect, "or denomination, according to the doctrines or formularies "of which religious instruction was to be afforded under the "endowment of the said school." This was subject to a proviso that "in the will, deed, or instrument, regulating the endowment "nothing was contained expressly requiring the children educated

"under such endowment to learn or be instructed according to the "doctrine or formularies of such church, sect or denomination." It is obvious that, with respect to the children of Nonconformists, this Act accorded them the smallest possible instalment of justice. Indeed the meaning of the Act goes to the extent that from all strict Church of England Endowments the children of Nonconformists are absolutely excluded, even though their parents might wish them to be educated in the tenets of the Church of England.

It was not till the passing of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 that the real necessities of the country, the demands of justice, and the claims of Nonconformists were, in respect of the reconstruction of Educational Endowments, approximately satisfied. This Act was based on the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission, to which, in its preamble, it refers.

At an early stage of the proceedings of the Schools Inquiry Commissioners, Mr. Miall, in reply to a series of questions which the Commissioners addressed to him, in common with a number of other competent authorities, stated the gist of the existing religious difficulty in respect to Educational Endowments. He asserted that, though he was a Dissenter, his opinion would be the same if he were a member of the Established Church. He pointed out that by the operation of the present rule of law the competition for the masterships of schools was narrowed, and that one-half of the population was excluded from such honourable competition; that boys up to the age of sixteen rarely could be induced to take an interest in controversial theology, or ecclesiastical polity; that nine-tenths of the people who cared about religion held the same essential doctrines of Christianity, and that such expressions as "godly learning" should be interpreted in a broad, catholic, Christian sense.

This was the problem which the Government had to deal with, and the Act solves it as follows. It divides all the Endowed Schools contemplated by the Act into two classes, which may be termed "Denominational" and "Undenominational" respectively. In order for a school to come under the first, or "Denominational" class, the following two conditions must be fulfilled:—First there must be found in the original instrument of foundation, or in the statutes

or regulations made by the founder, or under his authority in his life time, or within fifty years of his death, the express requirement of distinctive religious teaching; secondly, the requirement must have been satisfied up to the date of the commencement of the Act. If these conditions are not satisfied, the school is "Undenominational" for the purposes of the Act. Under the Act, Commissioners specially appointed for the purposes of the Act are required to prepare schemes for the reconstitution of educational endowments, such schemes to be laid for forty days before Parliament, and then, unless objected to, to become law. In the case of Undenominational Schools, the Act directs (1) that "the religious opinions of any person, or his attendance or non-"attendance at any particular form of religious worship, shall not "in any way affect his qualification for being one of the governing "body of an endowment; (2) that a person shall not be disqualified for being a master in an Endowed School by reason of his "not being, and not intending to be, in holy orders; (3) that day-"scholars attending an Endowed School may, by notice in writing "from their parents or guardians, be exempted from attending "prayer or religious worship, or from any lesson or series of lessons "on a religious subject, without loss of any advantage to which "the scholars would otherwise be entitled." Provisions are also made for the special case of boarding schools whereby scholars are, under such last-mentioned circumstances, to be allowed to attend the school as day scholars, and enjoy the exemption just described.

As to Denominational Schools, while the Commissioners were required to prepare schemes for the reconstitution of them as well as of the others, and so probably to substitute a new race of governors, nevertheless the religious opinions, and attendance or non-attendance at particular forms of religious worship might continue to affect the eligibility of persons to be governors, and the question of being or not intending to be in holy orders might continue to affect the eligibility of persons to be masters.

Thus while in Denominational Schools the discretion of the Commissioners in the matter of the religious opinions of the persons they appoint as governors is in no way controlled by the Act, in Undenominational Schools that discretion is so far controlled that no religious or ecclesiastical test of any sort must be imposed

or indirectly used. In both classes of schools it is left to the governing body, in conjunction with the head-master, to make such regulations for religious instruction in the school as shall seem fit to them, subject, in all cases, to the operation of the conscience-clause described.

The Act itself is thus seen to be a fair concession to the claims of justice. The line between a strict Denominational School and all other schools is drawn in a very different way, and a far more righteous spirit than was and is the practice in the Courts of Chancery. Under the Endowed Schools Act the Ilminster School, in which merely "Godly learning" was to be taught, would be reckoned as an Undenominational School. The Commissioners would be entitled to nominate persons of any religious faith to be governors, and would not be entitled to make the profession of any particular faith obligatory. With the Governors so nominated it would rest what should be, in the future, the religious faith, if any, to be inculcated in the school.

It thus appears that the responsibility of doing justice to the claims of Nonconformists has been shifted from the law courts on to the Legislature, and from the Legislature again, in a vast degree, to the Endowed Schools Commissioners. The present Commissioners happen to be men of rare liberality of mind and generosity of spirit. As a whole they have done the hard and invidious work they have undertaken in a way which cannot but commend itself even to the most exacting of critics. Nevertheless the claims of Nonconformists are still opposed by such a dead-weight of obstructiveness, prejudice, and intolerance in so many influential quarters that it is scarcely possible to urge too strongly the necessity of jealously watching the several schemes as they successively emerge from the laboratory of the Commissioners. The best or only answer of the Commissioners to the incessant assaults made upon them by the champions of corrupt and vested interests of all sorts is the real and threatening pressure of all the Nonconformists in the country. So far as they desire to do their work well and faithfully, they will be thankful to all persons who, even with an excess of declamation, point out the minutest deflection from a rigid standard of justice and equality.

The general practice of the Commissioners in organising the

governing body of a school has been to introduce and combine three distinct elements, which may be named official, representative, and co-optative. An instance may first be taken from a school which belongs to the Denominational class, such as King Edward VI.'s School at Sherborne, for which the *ex-officio* governors nominated are the Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Dorset, the Bishop of Salisbury, and the Vicar of Sherborne: the representative governors are to be chosen, four by members of Parliament representing the county and borough constituencies of Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire, and the remaining one by the masters of the school: there are fourteen co-optative governors (*i.e.*, governors who, on a certain number of them failing through death or otherwise, themselves elect the successors), especially named and living in Sherborne. The representative governors are nominated for four years, and the co-optative governors for ten, but they are all re-eligible.

This instance is only taken at random by way of marking the practice of the Commissioners with respect to a Denominational School. Another instance to the same effect may be taken from the scheme for the management of the Church of England School, founded by Dr. Morgan at Bridgewater. This scheme has already had a curious history in illustration of the avenues to liberal reform which, even in the case of strict Denominational Schools, the Endowed Schools Act discloses. The *ex-officio* governors nominated under the scheme were the Mayor of Bridgewater, three Vicars of Churches in Bridgewater, the Archdeacon of Taunton or a nominee of his for five years, and the Chairman of the School Board at Bridgewater. The representative governors were to be elected, two by the Town Council, and two by the School Board. There were six co-optative governors specially named. This school is said to have been previously managed in an exceptionally narrow and sectarian spirit. Great alarm was felt by the Church party in Bridgewater on account of the partially secular constitution of the new body of Governors. This alarm proved to be justified when it turned out in the first year after the scheme became law, that the Mayor and the Chairman of the School Board were both Nonconformists, and the Town Council and the School Board severally each elected two Nonconformist

representative governors. Thus, of the whole governing body of sixteen, six at least were Nonconformist. Nothing is necessarily known of the religious position of the six co-optative governors. But inasmuch as under the scheme they might dwindle down to four without a new election, it might result that, the whole body being only fourteen, the division in favour of the Church would at the most be eight to six, and so it would entirely depend on the choice of the new co-optative governors, or on the constant attendance of the supporters of the Church whether this school continue to be managed as a Church School. Thus with respect to Denominational Schools, it cannot be said that the Commissioners have used their powers in a narrow or illiberal spirit.

As respects Undenominational Schools, the Commissioners at first committed at once a serious practical error and what has proved to be, at least in the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, a legal mistake. In some cases, indeed, as in that of the Black Alms Charity of King Edward VI., nothing could be better than the list of official governors nominated by the Commissioners; they were the Mayor of Bath, the Recorder of Bath, the Chairman of Quarter Sessions for the Bath district, or his nominee for five years, the President of the Bath Literary and Philosophical Association, and the Chairman of the Bath School Board; the representative governors were to be elected by the Town Council. But in the case of other Undenominational schools the selection of *ex-officio* governors entailed a notorious and painful blunder. Following, with an unhappy and needless servility, the habitual practice of the Charity Commissioners of recognising the "*persona*," or parson of the parish, as a public official and no more nor less, and oblivious that, in choosing him as an *ex-officio* Governor, they were—in the very teeth of the seventeenth section of the Act—choosing one "whose religious opinions must affect his qualification for being one of the governing body," they made a retrograde and unfortunate step, which the Privy Council (at the direction of the law officers of the Crown) has forcibly compelled them to retrace. Some of these schemes have already become law, and it must rest with those who are interested or public-spirited enough for the purpose to contest the authority of any clerical Governor so chosen, or to dispute the validity of any

administrative act to which he shall be a party. As a flagrant specimen of a scheme for an Undenominational School, characterised by this flaw, may be taken the new school at Sherborne, to be constituted under section 30, out of the funds resulting from the suppression of doles and other like pauperising charities in Sherborne. The *ex-officio* governors were to be the *Vicar* and the *Churchwardens* of Sherborne, the Head Master of the King's School, and the Chairman of the School Board, if one should be formed. These appointments were, in fact, the price paid for the necessary consents to the suppression of existing institutions under section 30. As a consequence of the decision of the Privy Council, the schemes have to be remitted to the trustees in each case, and it is more than doubtful whether the necessary consents will again be obtained.

All that need be further said, under this head, is to repeat that those who have the claims of Nonconformists—and thereby of public justice—at heart, will do well to keep a keen eye upon the several schemes as they are presented. Whatever be the personal character and qualifications of the existing Commissioners, they cannot dispense with support, stimulus, and criticism, even of the most unflinching sort.

After the best law for the reconstruction of endowments on principles of morality and justice has been enacted, and the wisest scheme framed in compliance with the law, there is yet sometimes one remaining obstruction to be encountered before the goal is reached—Parliament has to assent to the scheme, and this generally means that either the attention of the House of Lords has to be distracted, or its prejudices conciliated. The significant case of Emanuel Hospital illustrates how feeble is the operation even of a well-considered and deliberately-adopted political measure in the teeth of bigotry and exclusiveness, entrenched behind the sanctity of aldermanic and aristocratic rhetoric. In the case of Emanuel Hospital all the possible arguments for and against the policy of the Endowed Schools Act met face to face in the most uncomplicated garb. That hospital educates, or professes to educate, sixty-four children, chosen under the irresponsible patronage of the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London. According to the distinctions taken by the Endowed Schools Act, the school would fall under

the head of Undenominational Schools; yet the Governors have put in the following pitiful plea for being specially excepted from the ordinary operations of the Act:—

"From the day of its foundation to the present time the hospital "has always been distinctly and expressly religious. Every visitor "is reminded of this directly he passes the porch. The central "feature of the group of buildings is the chapel, from which the "voice of daily praise and prayer has ascended without intermis- "sion for nearly three hundred years. Distinctly religious, moral, "and personal training has tinctured and characterised all the in- "struction imparted. Truly, in the multiplication of purely Secular "Schools which, under the operation of recent Acts of Parliament, "we are shortly to see all over the country, it would be but a mark "of generous respect for that large and influential body of the "people who still desire to see all education religious, to retain a "few distinctly religious institutions, working them, of course, "with the liberal conscience clause of the Endowed Schools "Act."

This claim for special exemption from the natural operation of a general Act of Parliament was asserted, be it remembered, on behalf of an institution which, with its very considerable funds, selects sixty-four children on the most pauperising of all methods—that of rewarding poverty,—gives them the narrowest form of so-called education, and confines its benefits to those only whose parents or guardians were willing they should be trained in the doctrines of a particular religious body. The scheme of the Commissioners contemplated reconstituting the hospital, in its scholastic department, in common with three other like institutions, as a great day-school for Westminster, capable of accommodating six hundred children, and a boarding-school in the country, capable of accommodating three hundred more. This is nine hundred children in all, instead of one hundred and forty-seven, the utmost number educated now by all the four schools. The object of the school, according to the scheme, would have been to supply a most valuable link (that which is above all needed in a system of national education) between the primary schools on the one hand, and the highest-grade schools and universities on the other. The election was to be by merit; but so judiciously and widely recognised as

to stimulate real industry and ability, without fostering habits of cramming or debasing rivalry. Exhibitions were freely provided, especially for orphans and for those residing in the neighbourhood; but pauperising influences were avoided by otherwise exacting a payment from every scholar, the trust funds being employed in supplying competent teachers and superior buildings, as well as in founding exhibitions and scholarships.

It is well known that Lord Salisbury and the Lord Mayor of London successfully conspired to arrest the further progress of this scheme. It has now been remodelled, in some respects for the better and in some for the worse. Instead of the Dean of Westminster and the Members of Parliament representing the City of Westminster, the *ex-officio* governors nominated are the Lord Mayor of London and the Chairman of the London School Board. Instead of the representative Governors nominated in the former scheme, one of whom was to have been the incumbent of a certain ecclesiastical district, six are to be nominated by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, and six by the London School Board. These changes are for the better, and are in obedience to the recognised construction of the Endowed Schools Act in reference to clerical appointments in the case of Undenominational Schools. The other change is unfortunately retrograde. Certain of the exhibitions are to be conferred upon "poor boys." This expression at once lets in both a deluge of fictitious poverty and a crowd of pauperising and degrading influences. It is introduced in deference to the ignorant declamation which won the ear of the House of Lords on the last debate. Notwithstanding these concessions, renewed opposition to the fresh scheme has manifested itself in the City of London, and it will demand a determined and united front on the part of all friends of education and religious equality to parry the assaults of the most compact, wealthy, and dexterously influential of all corporate bodies.

Within the last few weeks two new schemes for the management of Colston's Hospital in Bristol, and the Bristol United Schools, have made their appearance. It was not possible under the Act to combine these two institutions into one noble and magnificent educational establishment; hence one of the schemes contemplates a Denominational and the other an Undenomina-

tional system of Schools. Though under different governments, the work of secondary education is fairly mapped out between them, and provision is made for friendly intervention and for common members in the two governing bodies. The schemes themselves, and especially the parts of them which deal with the appointment of governors, will bear the strictest and even the most hostile investigation.

Next session a new era awaits educational legislation. In a year, or, at most, a couple of years, the powers of the existing Commissioners will legally terminate. Provision has to be made by what is called the second part of the Endowed Schools Bill for the permanent supervision and control of the newly-constituted foundations. It will demand the most strenuous and watchful efforts both of Nonconformists and of honest Churchmen to secure that no narrow prejudices or sinister interests interfere with the claims of public justice in perfecting the new legislation.

The Rev. JENKYN BROWN moved :—

"That this Conference, while acknowledging the great merits of the measure for the reorganisation and reform of endowed schools, passed in the Session of 1869, is strongly of opinion that the policy of the Endowed Schools Commissioners, as illustrated in the numerous schemes already issued, some of which have been sanctioned by Parliament, contravenes the spirit and in some cases the letter of the measure and the principles of religious equality. While the Conference regards with satisfaction the removal from the new schemes of the clerical *ex-officio* governors, it still regards with dissatisfaction the fact that of the first governing bodies appointed in nearly every instance a large majority of the governors belong to one political and ecclesiastical party. Their disapprobation is still further increased by the fact that the principles upon which these governing bodies are constituted secure the perpetuation of this injustice for an indefinite period. The Conference makes no special demand on behalf of Nonconformists as compared with members of the Church of England, but claims that the extreme to which the co-optative principle is recognised should be restricted, and that the area of popular selection should be so enlarged that Nonconformists should take their fair share with the rest of the community ; and this Conference earnestly trusts that the Government will decline to lay before Parliament any schemes which are open to the objections urged by this resolution."

This long resolution, he said, sweeps over the whole ground of this controversy. We are here as Nonconformists, it is true, but we are here as Englishmen and English citizens, and we claim in

regard to these endowed schools absolute, entire equality with all other citizens. (Applause.) We do not ask for any special privileges; we will not tolerate that others should have privileges, and we will not tolerate an inferior position for ourselves. (Applause.) I think it is well that we should start at the beginning—(laughter)—and I protest against the constitution of the Endowed Schools Commission itself. (Applause.) It is a commission representing a sect and only a sect. It is a commission in which one half of the nation has no voice whatsoever. (Hear, hear.) It is a commission incapable of understanding and incapable of sympathising either with our principles or with our rights. (Hear, hear.) I understand that representations were made to the Minister with regard to the formation of that commission, and we know with what success such representation was made—just the same success as that which all representations made to Liberal Governments have usually met with. (Hear, hear.) I think that it is not in the office of the Minister, but in the House of Commons itself, that the representation should be made. The commission should have been challenged in the face of the nation on the ground of right. It may be quite true that we should have been defeated there, but that class of victories ruins those who gain them—(applause)—and I am very sure of this, that we shall never appeal to the sense of justice and right of this nation without success. With a sort of feeling of self-complacency which only centuries of favouritism could have nourished and developed, I have no doubt we should be told that there were not to be found gentlemen fit to sit upon the commission, representing our views. We have been told that the commissioners would have been only too glad in their rampant liberality to have placed Nonconformists as co-optative or *ex-officio* governors, if they had only known where to find them. (Laughter.) We have men in Parliament and out of Parliament as competent to sit on that commission as any one of the three gentlemen who were appointed. (Applause.) We have on this platform gentlemen who have done more to deepen and broaden public opinion, and to imbue that public opinion with a sense of righteousness and justice, than all those commissioners put together. (Applause and laughter.) Now let us understand that if we mean to be respected we must

respect ourselves. (Applause.) Let us not go to any Minister's office, but in the face of day and in the face of our representatives let us ask from them a fair voice in the new constitution of these schools. I do not think it is too late to do that yet. The schemes that have been passed, and which are confessedly illegal schemes, are only six. There are many more, I think, to come, and it is time now that Mr. Gladstone should know that we have no faith in these gentlemen at all—(applause)—and that the only way to kindle our faith is to put a man on that commission in whom we believe and who understands us and our principles. (Applause.) Then we claim absolute equality in the government and offices of these schools. No one can look at the schemes that have been framed without seeing that they are absolutely unjust and religiously exclusive. As might be expected, the ecclesiastical element is overwhelming—churchwardens, curates, vicars, rectors, archdeacons, deans, bishops! The only ecclesiastical functionary omitted is the parish beadle. (Laughter.) Perhaps he is to be a co-optative governor of the Birmingham Grammar School. (Renewed laughter.) These schemes are not only unjust in the ecclesiastical, but there is an overwhelming co-optative element, and what they most facetiously, and I should think in the spirit of fun, call the representative element. Take as an example the school at Felstead. Why, if the people of Felstead were a set of lunatics, or if they were the most besotted heathens in the world, they could not be more thoroughly shut out from their own school. The representative members are elected by the four county members—that is a representation for Felstead indeed! Then there are three ecclesiastics in the co-optative body for one school, and that is what is called an Undenominational School! (Laughter.) Now, just think what chance any man has, who is not a Conformist, of being a master in that school. (Hear, hear.) Why, holy orders would outweigh all the teaching power in the universe. (Laughter and applause.) If an angel from heaven came down, and did not conform, he would be rejected. (Laughter.) The gentlemen from the universities who have been addressing you have a right to expect that those great institutions should be open to them as well as to any clergymen in the land. It is a mockery to tell us that holy

orders are not necessary, and yet so to contrive the governing body that no one out of holy orders will have a solitary chance of being elected a master. (Hear, hear.) Then we claim absolute equality in the religion of the schools. The Bill provides that the governing body shall have absolute power to arrange what the religious teaching shall be. The Church Catechism and formularies, and any "distinctive Church teaching," may revel unrestrained in these schools, and the only protection which Nonconformists have is the Conscience Clause. (Laughter.) Do any of you know what that is in a little town or in a country village? (Applause.) The time has come when we must tell Her Majesty's Government that an end must be put to the Conscience Clause from the most elementary school up to the universities—(loud applause)—and that wherever Government money and national property are used, the religion of no sect whatsoever must be taught. (Applause.) There is no resting place for us short of that. We are citizens; we can be taught literary matters on the same form. No one has a right to intrude upon that form his own creed or his own faith. I hope that this Conference will convey to Her Majesty's Government very distinctly that all the schemes, with rare exceptions, are such as violate in spirit and in act our rights, and that we shall never be content until that arrangement for the religious teaching of the Church of England in these national schools is entirely swept away. (Loud applause.)

Mr. W. M. FAWCETT seconded the resolution. He said: There is one point which, I think, will bear a little further consideration, I allude to a comparison of the action of the Endowed Schools Commissioners with the recommendations of the previous Schools Enquiry Commission. Now, I need hardly remind you that both Lord Lyttleton and Mr. Forster were active members of the Enquiry Commission, and concurred in its report. Mr. Forster, in introducing the Endowed Schools Bill to the House of Commons, expressly stated that he wished to be considered responsible for the whole of that report; and he further affirmed that the measure he sought leave to introduce carried out to a considerable extent in some respects, and in others almost altogether, the recommendations of the Schools Enquiry Commission. The preamble to the Endowed Schools Bill expressly recites the appointment of these

commissioners, that they had made their report, and had thereby recommended various changes in the government of endowed schools, and had further recommended other measures with the object of improved education; and this I take to mean improved education by carrying out the recommendations of the Schools Enquiry Commissioners. Thus from Mr. Forster's own language, and from the preamble of the Act, there is at least some evidence to show that the intention of Parliament in conferring upon the Endowed Schools Commissioners the extensive powers possessed by them, was to enable them to carry out the recommendations of the Schools Enquiry Commissioners. At any rate, whether that was so or not, I think that the suggestions of a body such as the Schools Enquiry Commission, composed of men of high ability and undoubted impartiality, suggestions founded on evidence obtained from all parts, are entitled to the greatest deference. And independently of that one would hardly expect to find Lord Lyttelton as an Endowed Schools Commissioner altogether recanting the opinions expressed by Lord Lyttelton as a Schools Enquiry Commissioner. Well, now, let us see how the matter stands. How far have the recommendations of the Schools Enquiry Commission been carried out in the schemes already sanctioned by the Endowed Schools Commissioners? Now of course one of the first questions that would come before the Endowed Schools Commissioners for decision would be as to the constitution of the governing bodies of educational endowments. Should the trustees be self-elected, or *ex officio*, or representative? How many trustees should be appointed, and from what class chosen? On all these points the Schools Enquiry Commissioners had made very definite recommendations, and had carefully based those recommendations on the evidence contained in their supplementary report, but on all these points I think the Endowed Schools Commissioners have decided as though that evidence and those recommendations had never existed. Take first of all the important matter of the number of the trustees. While the Schools Enquiry Commissioners mentioned from six to twelve as being the number desirable, the Endowed Schools Commissioners, I believe, in no fewer than eighteen out of the forty schemes have exceeded the extreme limit specified. Then let us go to the really important

question of the mode of the choice of the trustees. I need hardly remind you that under the old system the vast majority of trustees were co-optative or self-elective. If that system had proved practically successful there would indeed have been no need for the Endowed Schools Bill, and what do the Schools Enquiry Commissioners expressly say on this point? "The system of co-optation, or self-election, as it is called, that is, of trustees being appointed to fill vacancies by the surviving members, has advantages when the surviving members are by some accident the wisest; but when trustees are selected, not because they occupy a leading position in the town or have intelligence and public spirit, but on the ground of personal friendship, or political or theological agreement, or merely social position, there is an all but inevitable tendency to an exclusive tone of feeling." That is to say, in the judgment of these Enquiry Commissioners the system of co-optation has no advantages, unless you can secure that by a merciful dispensation of Providence all the foolish, all the wicked, all the obstructive trustees shall be first removed, so as to leave the appointment of their successors exclusively upon the wise members. Now, what course have the Endowed Schools Commissioners taken? Why, in the face of this recommendation they have inserted co-optative trustees in no fewer than 33 out of the 40 schemes; in 30 out of the 33 the co-optative trustees constituted one-third, or more than one-third of the whole governing body, and in ten cases half, or more than half. Ten of the co-optative governors are clergymen, and out of 74 co-optative governors, 65 are Churchmen, and only nine Nonconformists. Now, what do the Schools Enquiry Commissioners say as to *ex-officio* trustees? "Usually the majority of such persons having no natural connection with the school, leave the management with one or two who may happen to take an interest in it, or to some persons resident in the place." They mention a school at Normanton governed by about 20 *ex-officio* trustees, of which the assistant commissioner reported that he found the master leisurely reading *Bell's Life in London*, and eleven children following their own devices. (Laughter.) That is not a very encouraging opinion of the Schools Enquiry Commissioners, yet, in spite of that opinion, the Endowed Schools Commissioners are so enamoured of this system that they have inserted

ex-officio trustees in every one of the 40 schemes contained in this table. Now let us come to the representative trustees. The Enquiry Commissioners specify as a defect in existing boards of trustees the circumstances that the trustees do not belong to the same class as the children, and they specially recommend that the class to which the parents belong shall be well represented on the Board. Now, how have the Endowed Schools Commissioners carried this recommendation out? Why, in just two of the 40 schemes the trustees are to be elected by the parents, while in eight cases the representative governors are to be chosen by the vestry, that is practically by the parson of the parish. On all of these three points the Endowed School Commissioners have deliberately disregarded the recommendations of the Schools Enquiry Commissioners. How are we to account for this? Mr. Beresford Hope let drop a remark on the second reading of the Endowed Schools Bill which throws some light on this. He said many persons feared that if the Bill became law, many schools which had hitherto been Church schools for practical purposes, would be gradually metamorphosed into Dissenting schools, and, on the other hand, Dissenting schools might be changed into Church schools by a dexterous manipulation in the choice of the governing body. All the facts seem to point to this dexterous manipulation. (Hear, hear.) How otherwise can we account for the attempt to set up the clerical *ex-officio* trustees, or explain the fact that out of seventy-four co-optative governors sixty-five were Churchmen? What conclusion is to be drawn from this other than that the Endowed Schools Commissioners have determined that institutions intended to be national shall be administered in the interest of a single section of the community? The restriction of trustees of schools to members of the Church of England appears to be now the one object of Lord Lyttelton and his colleagues. To accomplish that object they are prepared to disregard the recommendation of their predecessors, and to contravene the intention of Parliament; they are prepared to oppose the tendency of Liberal opinion all over the kingdom, and to raise a barrier to that principle of respect for religious opinion which has penetrated our legislation and affected all the relations between man and man. (Applause.)

Mr. R. W. DALE: I think it important to call the attention of the Conference to one or two points in connection with the subject now before us. I feel that we ought to appeal—and, if necessary, appeal in Parliament—to Her Majesty's Ministers for some modification in the constitution of the commission that has the administration of this Act. I have no doubt Her Majesty's Government will ask us whether the time has not come for disregarding, in the constitution of commissions intended to serve the State, the religious opinions of its members, and I suppose all of us would be ready to answer that we trust the time will come when it will be possible, in constituting a commission of this sort, to give no consideration at all to the religious faith of the persons who are placed upon it; but let it be remembered that for very many generations the whole nation has been divided into two camps by the religious opinions held among its citizens, or rather in consequence of the special patronage bestowed by the State upon one particular type of religious opinion. As the result of this separation of the nation into two great bodies, the fairest men on one side are in great danger of misapprehending the position and claims of men on the other side. I believe that Lord Lyttelton and Canon Robinson and Mr. Hobhouse are fair-minded and generous men, but then they have grown up in an atmosphere altogether unfavourable to a knowledge of the real condition of English society in relation to the questions that separate us from the Established Church. (Hear, hear.) If we were appointing persons to administer any important Parliamentary measure in Ireland, we should certainly take care to appoint some Irishmen on that commission—men who knew the customs and the traditions of the country; and in this case it is most important that one of the members of the commission should be a man who has not lived all his life under what we believe to be the disastrous influences of a favoured and patronised Church. Then, allow me to remind you that, although the commissioners have very much in their power, those who reside in the localities affected by the various schemes have very much in their power too. I believe the commissioners are perfectly prepared to listen to statements drawn up and fairly supported, sent from the localities to which the schemes apply. And do not suppose that when a scheme is published the commissioners are

absolutely committed to the details of that scheme. In a memorandum which was sent me from the office a few days ago, there is this clause, to which, I think, our attention ought to be directed:—"After the scheme is provisionally framed it must be published; after publication any one is at liberty to send in objections and suggestions." The commissioners are then in a strictly judicial position bound to hear all parties and decide on their merits. It is not necessary that a man should be a ratepayer in order to send in such a memorial to the commissioners. Anybody living in the neighbourhood of a school affected by a scheme may forward his complaint to the commissioners with regard to any of the details of the scheme, and ask for a modification. Now there is one point to which I do not think we have yet paid sufficient attention. You have been reminded this morning that the 19th clause of the Endowed Schools Act preserves the Denominational character of schools under certain conditions. Now, so far as I know, there has hardly been a case in which we have challenged the decision of the Commissioners as to the Denominational character of a school which they have declared properly belongs to the Church of England. I think that when we learn that the Commissioners have decided that a school comes under the protection of clause 19, we should inquire whether or not the circumstances of the case justify placing the school under that clause, and reserving it to the Church of England. In another memorandum the Commissioners say—"To come under the terms quoted [that is to be kept as a Denominational School], it is not enough that the school has hitherto been under the management of exclusively Denominational trust deeds, or that by the deed of foundation or by any statutes, or by a scheme of the Court of Chancery, or of the Charity Commissioners, the trustees or teachers are required to be members of a particular church or denomination, or the scholars are required to attend a particular place of worship, or that by long usage or by direction of the scheme certain doctrines, formularies, or catechisms have been taught; there must be, first, the express requirement of distinctive religious teaching; secondly, that requirement must be expressed in either the original instrument of foundation or in statutes given under the founder's authority and

within fifty years of his death; thirdly, absence of any proof of breach of the requirement." Now, I think with that statement from the Commissioners of the principles on which they are acting with regard to the 19th clause, it does become us to see whether we cannot rescue some schools from the denominational character that is likely to be imposed upon them by a direct appeal to the commissioners on the matter. I have reason to believe that the commissioners feel extremely anxious about this particular point. This question raises controversies of extreme delicacy and difficulty, and I think that the Nonconformists in the various localities affected by the schemes ought not to leave the commissioners without their kindly assistance in forming a right judgment on this matter.

Rev. T. W. DAVIDS, of Colchester: I just wish to say that in this matter we have it in our power very effectively to help ourselves if we will only bestir ourselves in our several neighbourhoods. Reference was made by one of the speakers to a case in the county of Essex. Since I entered this room this morning I find that the movement which we have made in that direction has been so far successful that two Nonconformists have been put upon the board of government. (Applause.) I know of other cases also in which, when gentlemen have thought fit to stir locally, they have been surprised to find the amount of sympathy that was immediately evoked in quarters where they did not look for it. The commissioners are greatly dependent on information which they receive at second hand. An assistant commissioner comes down to a locality where there is a school. He convenes a meeting in the vestry. What information he gets on the spot he gets from the parties composing that meeting, and the commissioners above know little or nothing more than he communicates. Our first duty, then, is to watch when the assistant commissioner comes down, and to take care that he is surrounded by somebody beside the town clerk and the clergyman. The moral is, that we should help ourselves, and be wide awake and look after the endowed schools in our several localities. (Applause.)

Rev. A. TILLEY, of Cardiff: I beg to suggest that the following words should form part of the resolution:—

"That in the opinion of this Conference, the present constitution of the

commission should be revised, seeing that the commissioners have hitherto shown such a decided leaning to one denomination as to forfeit the confidence of Nonconformists."

Mr. R. W. DALE: The powers of the Commission I think terminate in the course of a very few months, and they will have to be re-appointed.

The Rev. A. TILLEY: I move this as a rider or amendment.

Mr. R. W. DALE: The Secretaries accept it as a rider to the resolution.

The Rev. F. S. JOHNSTONE: I second it.

The resolution and rider were then unanimously agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: I have only to congratulate you upon the tone of the proceedings of the first sitting. I believe I state somewhat below the truth when I say that 1,880 delegates have come up to this Conference. (Hear, hear.)

Three cheers were then given for the Chairman, and the Conference adjourned.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

THE Conference re-assembled in the evening at the Friends' Meeting House, which was again crowded with delegates and visitors. The latter, indeed, assembled in such numbers as to render it impossible for the chapel to accommodate them; and it was arranged that an adjournment should take place to the Free Trade Hall. There, accordingly, the meeting was held; the delegates occupying the body of the hall, and the general public the galleries. The chair was taken by Mr. William Crosfield, of Liverpool.

In opening the proceedings, the CHAIRMAN said: I am indebted for the honour of holding this office to the circumstance of my being the representative of the Nonconformists of Liverpool—a body of gentlemen who have been, I will not say vilified, but who have been thought by some to be not quite up to the mark. I feel that it is an unjust accusation. We were the first body in the kingdom to protest against by-laws adopted for the payment of fees to denominational schools. We were the first to send a deputation to Mr. Forster, protesting against their confirmation. We were received with all the graciousness that you know Cabinet ministers can display, but I am afraid that we produced very little impression. We did our best, however, and I think we ought not to be considered backward in the cause. Now as to the important subjects which are to be discussed this evening. The first is the subject of the payment of fees to denominational schools. I believe we shall be unanimous in protesting against that as an infraction of the spirit

of the Elementary Education Act. We are fully justified in demanding that the 25th clause of that Act shall be repealed. (Hear, hear.) We are entitled to ask for that and nothing less than that, because of the promise made in the speech of the Prime Minister, in June, 1870. "We propose," he said, "that local boards shall cease to have connection with or relation to voluntary schools, and that these voluntary schools, so far as they have depended on public aid, shall only stand in relation to the Privy Council." The payment of fees by school boards to denominational schools is, therefore, in direct violation of the spirit of the Elementary Education Act when it was first introduced. The Marquis of Hartington recently called the present arrangement a compromise. Now we were no parties to that compromise. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Miall having dealt with that subject so fully and so effectually this morning, I will not, as I intended, further allude to it. As to Mr. Forster, I scarcely knew what to say. (Laughter.) I confess that my former confidence in him is shaken; and as to his boast of "cantering over the religious difficulty," I think it has landed him in a quagmire that both he and his steed will be glad to get out of. Some allusion has been made to the Scotch Education Bill. My impression is that our brethren on the other side of the Tweed are alive to the consequences of denominational teaching. They must see the natural result in reference to the Irish Bill; and it is a matter of surprise that our friends in the Church of England do not also perceive that their taking fees from the rates must involve the payment of the Roman Catholics in Ireland. The next question that is to come before us I will not allude to, but will at once call upon the gentlemen who are to address you.

PAYMENT OF FEES TO DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS.

A paper on this subject was read by the Rev. HENRY W. CROSSKEY, one of the Secretaries of the Central Nonconformist Committee. He said—

The payment by School Boards of the fees of children attending denominational schools is no exceptional incident, accidentally involved in the working of the Elementary Education Act, which

may be discussed as a point of detail, and dismissed as insignificant whatever decision as to its propriety may be reached, but is part of an educational policy which, alike in the principle upon which it rests and the method of its administration, is incompatible with the existence of religious liberty. The immediate question at issue does not stand by itself. When the payment of fees is considered in connection with the care which was taken to provide a large number of new denominational schools after the passing of the Education Act, and the enormous and unnecessary increase of grants in their aid; the power vested in School Boards to institute the extremest sectarian teaching; the difficulties placed by the Department in the way of erection of Board schools themselves; the flagrant attempt to deliver those endowed schools, which are the property of the people, into the hands of a sect,—it is discovered to be a strong and useful link in that chain of ecclesiastical authority with which it is now attempted to bind the free development of the education of this kingdom.

When the fees are paid to a denominational school, under whose control is education placed? Who appoint the teachers, select the books, and determine the amount of time to be devoted to sectarian instruction within the liberal limits rendered legal by Mr. Forster? The School Board, by paying fees, abnegates its functions as a School Board, and becomes a mere instrument for collecting money with which to pay other organisations to take charge of the education of a town. It hands public funds to persons who, in relation to the community, occupy no official position, and acknowledge no local responsibility. The State does *not* accept the duty abandoned by the School Board. It furnishes "grants in aid," according to a certain exceedingly low standard, *but* with the direction of a denominational school the denomination is alone concerned. The parent has no voice in the denominational school. He pays the taxes out of which the grant in aid comes, and he is subjected to the rate; but a few rich sectarian subscribers will take charge of his child. By the payment of fees the Board, although elected by the ratepayers, refuses to do their work, the parent is put out of court, while the nominees of rival sects become the managers of schools which will exist in the place of national schools, and in many districts will be filled by a compul-

sory law. The ecclesiastical committees, placed in authority over education, are assisted by the fees they receive, in their specially sectarian work. It is asserted that this is not a correct representation, since every public school has a conscience clause, and the fee paid by a Board must be held to apply only to secular results. The very fact that a school requires a conscience clause proves that it exists as a sectarian institution. (Cheers.) The fees are devoted to the support of the whole school as a school, and those who flatter themselves with the understanding "that the payment of fees is not made in respect of any instruction in denominational religious subjects," may be answered in the words of the Apostle Paul:— "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it, therefore, not of the body? And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body, is it, therefore, not of the body?" Although the amount of fee paid may not exceed the cost of secular instruction, it will materially relieve those who support denominational schools as bulwarks of their Church. When existing schools are mentioned in the House of Commons, by a happy euphuism, the word "voluntary" is substituted for "denominational." The policy of the Department is rendering the term "voluntary" altogether deceptive, except so far as it may mean willingness to receive State aid. (Cheers.) By filling sectarian schools with rate-supported scholars, and increasing the grants in aid, a gigantic system of religious endowment has been organised by Her Majesty's Government; and any strong sect, such as the Church of England or the Church of Rome, will be able to educate its children almost entirely without private subscriptions. I am personally acquainted with a school which, during the past year, educated 220 children at a cost to the subscribers of £7. 10s.; and with another school, which educated 544 (676 on the books), with a contribution of about £70, and even the whole of this will probably not be required after next examination. In some cases, by certain acute methods of managing, an actual profit may be won, to be carried over to a building account.

As an example of the possible working of the new system on a large scale, take the following case. From a return (March 2, 1870) it appears there were in Leeds 84 Church of England schools, supported in the following manner:—

	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions	2,368	5	4
Fees	4,768	17	4
Grant	4,325	3	4
Total cost.....	11,462	6	0

What are the possibilities under the new Act and code? Let empty benches be filled by payments from rate, and a moderate estimate would give—

	£	s.	d.
Fees	5,768	17	4
Let £2,000 be struck off subscriptions, leaving	368	5	4
Amount of fees and subscriptions	6,137	2	8

The amount still required to meet the total cost of £11,462. 6s., will therefore be, £5,325. 3s. 4d. The whole of this sum can be earned (and as the shock of the higher standards is got over, will probably be earned) without exceeding the 50 per cent increase, and without transgressing the limitation of the code that the grant in aid is not to exceed the income derived from voluntary contributions, and from school fees, and from any other sources other than the Parliamentary grant. 14,443 children *may be* educated in the principles of the Church of England by a subscription of only £368. 5s. 4d., State money and rates helping out the fees; and as the machinery is brought into smooth working order, even this pittance may be diminished. The *Spectator* (Jan. 6, 1872) frankly and without circumlocution, admits that "*The Education Act will be protected by a vast mass of beneficiaries!*" (Cheers.)

Mr. Lowe informs us that a great deal of what he terms, in language not very complimentary to schools the Government to which he belongs specially favours, "the *virus*," has been taken out of denominational schools.

"The Bill of last year has imposed a conscience clause and a time-table, which render it impossible that the religion of any child should in any way be tampered with." (Speech at Halifax, December 4.)

Denominational schools, in which teachers and books are selected

by the sect, are pervaded by a general tone and temper of sectarianism it is beyond the power of any conscience clause whatever to check. In Burns' Standard Reading Books, "adapted to the requirements of the code of 1871," the following historical lessons occur:—"Many heresies have desolated the Church at various times since the age of the Apostles, but none ever produced more disastrous results than those which arose in the beginning of the 16th century, the followers of which are known by the common name of Protestants." (Bk. v. p. 192.) Luther is described as going on "step by step in his miserable career" It is stated that,—

"The long reign of Elizabeth was a period of great temporal prosperity for England. But we must remember that the prosperity of the wicked is often the greatest curse God can inflict upon them. They are spared here because they are to be punished hereafter."—*(Ibid.* p. 39.)

"The good old times of England" were the times "when Mary ascended the throne, and 'England's sons' are taught that the 'hour is nigh'" when—

"Again shall long processions sweep,
Through Lincoln's minster pile,
Again shall banner, cross, and cope
Gleam through the incensed aisle.

* * * * *

"And tierce and nones and matins
Shall each have their holy lay,
And the Angelus at compline
Shall sweetly close the day.

"England of saints! the peace will dawn,
But not without the fight;
So come the contest when it may,
And God defend the right."
—*Bk. v.* 38, 39.

These are lessons in a book specially "adapted to the code of 1871." They are lessons intended for ordinary school hours. And yet the conscience of the parent is supposed to be protected by the "Conscience Clause!" (Loud cheers.) Regarding the time-table, even the poor and unworthy protection granted the ratepayer in the Board schools by the provision that no religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any parti-

cular denomination shall be taught (although the creed contained in catechism and formularly may be taught) does *not* extend to the denominational school. The Government dared not openly apply the ratepayers' money to denominational purposes in a Board school; and a flimsy and deceptive Conscience Clause was contrived to secure the reality by sacrificing the shadow, while by the payment of fees to existing schools a sect is directly subsidised. A Time-table Conscience Clause does not touch the principle upon which Nonconformity stands. We challenge the fairness, and we doubt the Christian results of the application, of a public tax to the service of any sect. We contend that whenever the responsibilities of the Church are thrown upon the State, the State is guilty of an interference with the freedom of its citizens, the injustice of which can be measured by a precisely corresponding loss of spiritual power within the Church itself. We are not answered by being told that the course to which we object will be pursued at one hour and not at another. (Cheers.)

Nonconformists generally are prepared to accept, honourably and fairly, a national system of education. Out of 3,230 building grants applied for during the time of grace, 460 were sought by Nonconformists of all denominations, 82 by Roman Catholics, and 2,852 by the Church of England. In some towns Nonconformists have offered their schools to boards at a nominal rent, on condition that their unsectarian character should be preserved. The reward meted out to Nonconformists for their readiness to sacrifice sectarian gain for the sake of national education, is to have their money seized to pay the fees to Church of England and Catholic schools.

If Nonconformists are content to receive this treatment with quietness, they must be prepared to bow with shame beneath such words as Cassius spoke:—

> "And why should Cæsar be a tyrant then?
> . . I know he would not be a wolf,
> But that he sees the Romans are but sheep;
> He were no lion, were not Romans hinds—"

and abandon for ever their dream of religious equality.

Parents will be canvassed to send their children into these Church of England and Catholic schools, by Scripture-readers and

priests, who will make the payment of fees a bribe. The encouragement of pauperism will accompany ecclesiastical ascendancy. (Cheers.) Proof is close at hand. The following letter, addressed by Mr. J. W. Southern, a school manager in Manchester, will show how the system works in that city :—

"As the manager of an undenominational school in Hulme, I was waited upon some time ago by an officer of the Manchester Board, who wished to know whether we were willing to accept Board scholars. I declined to do anything until I had consulted my fellow managers; but, pending our decision, some children were brought by the officer to the school, and forms left with the master, by which the Board undertook to pay their fees. The children turned out to be our own scholars; hitherto their parents paid their fees, and they attended well; since the Board relieved the parents, they have hardly attended at all. A short time ago, our head master sent one of the pupil teachers to the home of an absentee scholar to ascertain the cause of absence. She returned with the statement that a pupil teacher from another school (Episcopalian) had canvassed the mother to send the child to their school, and they would get it placed on the School Board list. The woman said, 'I knew my neighbours were getting their children paid for, and I did not see why I shouldn't have my child paid for too, and so I let her go.' I have heard of this kind of inducement being offered in other cases, but one authenticated fact I consider worth a dozen 'hearsays,' and I therefore called upon the mother, and ascertained that the facts were exactly as stated, and also that the promise had been kept, and the child was now paid for by the Board. I hope these cases are singular, but I fear they are not."

The pauperising effect of the payment of fees from rates is shown by the fact that those who have paid for their own children are giving it up. In Salford, although during the last year the Board has paid for 1,737 children, the number in attendance is 713 less. For the honour of Christianity, as for the noblest interests of education, this alliance between pauperism and priestcraft must be broken by the strong arm of Nonconformity. (Loud cheers.)

Supposing, however, a town to be full of denominational schools,

must not the fees be paid? I reply that the existence of denominational schools alone does not furnish "efficient and suitable" provision for the education of a free people, and that either Board schools, in which fees may be remitted, ought at once to be erected in every district, or the denominational school must agree to submit its secular hours to Board control. Why should a denominational school object to this course? According to its own showing it is only for secular instruction it receives the fees, and it is only secular instruction it gives outside the Conscience Clause hours. There can be no principle, therefore, to prevent it from hiring its room to a Board during those hours in which (itself being witness) it uses them for secular work alone. In the case of conflicting interests, the denominational must give way to the national school, and not the national school to the denominational.

The great difficulty in the way of declining to pay fees to denominational schools is, we are told by high dignitaries of Church and State, the "conscience of the parent." The parent has a right to choose a school in which his own religion is taught, and his conscience may be violated if he is compelled to send his child to a Board school. In other words, it is claimed that a parent should be provided at the public expense with whatever religious teaching he chooses, as the conditions under which he will permit his child to be taught the rudiments of knowledge. I deny the alleged right. The State declares ignorance a public nuisance, and while a parent has no right to permit his child to be ignorant, his poverty constitutes no claim for relief upon any matter of which the State takes no cognisance. His religious wants must be provided for by religious organizations. (Cheers.)

The difference between the conscience argument as applied to the ratepayer, and as applied to the parent, is that the ratepayer objects to pay for the positive teaching of dogmas he disbelieves; the parent objects to *not* receiving from the State something he requires, and which the Christian churches of the country actually exist to furnish. In the one case, there is a positive outrage; in the other merely a refusal of what can be obtained elsewhere. If a member of the Church of England asserts that he has a right to a free ticket for

Church of England teaching, I reply that his Church is bound to serve him out of its own resources and can not justly send in its bill to the country twice for doing precisely the same work. If the Roman Catholic Church, or any other Church, has not sufficient energy and self-denial to teach its poorer members their own religion, it will belie the great History of Christendom, which records the unsparing surrender of property and life for the sake of Christ and God. The best result of withholding fees from denominational schools will be to compel the Christian Church to do its own Christian work. (Cheers.)

Moreover, if ordinary school hours are honestly kept for the secular work required by existing regulations, there will, during those hours, be precisely the same teaching at every school, whether Protestant or Catholic; and the imagined right of a parent to compel the State to support a sectarian school, either amounts to the ridiculous claim that he ought to have his child taught the same things in one building and not in another, or throws upon the State the duty of providing any and every form of religion its subjects may ask.

Suppose, however, a Catholic parent to say, justly or unjustly, my conscience cannot permit me to send my child to a Board school. What can be done? Can he be compelled? I admit at once, that if a Board school be in any sense of the word a sectarian school, he can *not* be compelled; but compulsion, in this case, is a wrong to the community, and is no element in a special claim made *in formâ pauperis*. What is the remedy? The remedy is neither to abandon compulsion or pay fees, but to confine the teaching in Board schools to those secular subjects which all children must be taught if they are to be educated at all, leaving religious instruction to the voluntary exertions of each sect. (Cheers.) Should the Catholics finally declare that they will not permit their children to learn even the common rudiments of knowledge, in company with other children, although the public schools are made absolutely free of any element to which religious objection can be taken,—they must pay for their own private institutions. (Loud cheers.) Purely sectarian organisations, whether Catholic or Protestant, have no claim upon the resources of the community; and Nonconformists apply no law to Roman Catholics which they do not

accept for themselves. It would be an injustice to force Catholic children into Protestant schools, or Protestant children into Catholic schools, but it will be no injustice to force neglected children into schools, neither Protestant nor Catholic, but the schools of the community. The fact that a child is not taught at the public expense the private belief of its parents, is no legitimate ground for permitting them to deprive it of education altogether.

The plea of conscience urged on behalf of the parent, that he may obtain from the rates what the zeal of his Church should supply, will be in many cases only another name for the conscience of the clergyman and priest; and its satisfaction will be as injurious to religion as unjust to the community. The religion taught as a kind of State alms will be less respected; an ignominious ecclesiastical begging for children will take the place of a Divine missionary influence, and the parent's conviction that he ought to care for his own religion will be diminished. A ratepayer, who believes that Christianity will only achieve its noblest triumphs when disconnected from rates and taxes, is not bound to surrender his conscience (that is, his sense of what he owes to God, as responsible to Him for so guiding his conduct as to help forward the coming of His kingdom) to a demand as baseless as a claim of right as detrimental in exercise to the influence of a pure and undefiled religion.

Various statements have been made to drive Nonconformists out of court. By accepting State grants to denominational schools, have not Nonconformists lost the right to oppose payment of fees from the rates? Temporary acquiescence in a provisional plan for the relief of a great want, neither logically or morally necessitates submission to the permanent establishment of denominationalism as a national system.

Ought not the importance of local self-government to secure quiet acceptance of the decisions of School Boards? No local authority ought to have power to tamper with religious equality, any more than it should be left to local authority to decide whether theft is, or is not, a crime. Religious equality requires an imperial guarantee.

Is not the payment of fees a small and insignificant matter? The returns from Manchester, Liverpool, and other towns prove that it may employ a large percentage of the rates; and the prin-

ciple once granted, the practice is capable of indefinite extension.* The supply of Board schools is, moreover, most seriously delayed and limited by the operation of this plan; while the religious objection to subsidising rival sects to take charge of education is not affected by the largeness or smallness of the amount of fees which may be paid.

Is not religious equality admitted when fees may be paid to the schools of all sects? Nonconformists object to the application of a rate to dogmatic teaching; and there is no "EQUALITY" established by proposing to divide the money.

The payment of fees by School Boards to denominational schools is one chapter in a great controversy. On the one side is the principle that education must be dispensed by dominant ecclesiastical authorities, claiming the schoolroom as well as the church as their own peculiar possession; and employing national resources, which ought to be devoted to education alone, to upbuild their own supremacy.

On the other side is the principle that the national school belongs to the nation, and must, therefore, be freed from the regulations of a sectarian exclusiveness; while religious men must be trusted to exercise their noble activities in their own place and at their own time on behalf of that Christian culture best given by those who most devoutly believe.

It is *not* a question between education and *no* education. The Government deliberately increases and strengthens denominational schools; and then one of its members ventures to say we must either take them or leave children in the streets.† A sectarian

* The following are the returns of the amounts paid in school fees in *Manchester:*

	£	s.	d.
Church schools	399	4	0
Roman Catholic	235	0	10
Presbyterian, and all others	89	11	10
	£723	16	8

† "On the one side everything had been done, on the other everything had to be begun. What was the practical inference from that? Why, that they should make up their minds on this point,—Was it better that the children should be taught in denominational schools, or that they should not be taught at all? Because it might be possible for a well-directed agitation to destroy the present denominational system. Suppose that those most eager against it should sweep it away, what would be the result? Would the destruction of these schools provide schools for the School Boards?

system on an enormous scale is being established, and we are asked to pause in our objections until the work is done, and the new vested interests become too powerful to remove! It is the alternative always offered by priesthoods, and by those who, however unconsciously or unwillingly, do the work of priesthoods. They ever cry, "Be saved by us or perish!" And attempt to justify their words by consolidating their power. (Cheers.)

Without interposing any period of ignorance, it would be perfectly possible for Boards to provide temporary accommodation; and to hasten the erection of Board schools far more earnestly than they are inclined to do now that the power of paying fees is in their hands, apparently to the equal satisfaction of the Department and their own sectarian members.

It would be perfectly possible to separate the religious and the secular elements of instruction more fairly than is now done, and commit each subject to its own teachers,—the teachers of the one subject being provided by voluntary effort, those of the other being the servants of the community. It would be perfectly possible to arrange that representatives of the ratepayers should have some control over schools supported by public funds, during those hours in which ordinary instruction is given to children of all sects.

In these and other ways a national system could obtain what it has not at present, a chance of growth; and no necessity whatever could be pleaded for paying fees from public rates to schools under private management.

Reviewing the facts, as they reveal the policy of the Government, I deliberately charge the Education Department with a determination to crush out a national and establish an ecclesiastical system of education.

The attempt of the Church of England and the Church of Rome, by the aid of the Government, to grasp the control of education, stands to this country as the Ultramontane conspiracy does to Europe.

No; the only effect would be to destroy the means of education for the present race of children, and they would be utterly unable for many years to replace it. They would stop short the progress of education, and interpose between the children now being brought up, and the children that would come when the School Board schools were ready, a great period of ignorance, crime, and misery, that would be created in the ambition to destroy one system before another was set up."—*Mr. Lowe's Speech at Halifax, Dec. 7, 1871.*

It must be resisted at all hazards—(loud cheers)—and every tie of party must yield to the loftier responsibilities of a faith in the free life of the soul and the free culture of the mind of man. (Continued cheering.)

The Rev. J. G. ROGERS moved the following resolution:—

"That this Conference, regarding the payment by School Boards of the fees of children attending denominational schools as involving the imposition of taxation for the support of the creeds of differing churches, requests one of its friends, immediately on the assembling of Parliament, on behalf of the Nonconformists of England and Wales, to bring forward a motion for the repeal of the 25th clause of the Elementary Education Act—(applause)—and the omission of the words from clause 74, providing for the payment of the whole or any part of the fees of any child where the parent satisfies the School Board that he is unable from poverty to pay the same, and pledges its members to support this motion with all the resources at their command."

He said: I think that we are an ungrateful body. We have been calumniating Mr. W. E. Forster, whereas it seems to me that there is no man in England who is so much entitled to the gratitude of this Conference as the Vice-president of the Council. This Conference owes its existence to Mr. Forster. (Laughter.) There was a time when Dissenters were taunted as being divided in relation to this question of education. Mr. Forster has made us one. (Hear, hear.) There was a time when we were feeble, hesitating, and stammering in our utterances; there is no want of decision, there is no faltering, there is no uncertainty about us now, and we owe it all to Mr. Forster. We thank him specially for this 25th clause. (Laughter.) It is amazing how much we were prepared to bear, but when in addition to the snubbing of our deputations, and the remarkable cumulative vote by which our electoral power has been so seriously crippled and paralysed in the boroughs, and to the rejection of Mr. Jacob Bright's amendment, it was found that the purpose of this Act was to strengthen denominational schools, then at last we found we could bear no more, and as one man we rise up and say it shall not be. (Loud applause.) We have been blamed because we did not oppose this 25th clause as it was passing through committee. Why did not we oppose it? Simply because we had too much trust in the Government. We did not believe it possible that

a Government which owed so much to us was going to sell and betray us into the hands of our opponents. Our attention was concentrated on these new schools which we thought were going to take the place of the old denominational schools, and now we find that behind the mask there was simply an elaborate conspiracy to establish this denominational system. (Applause.) Then we are blamed by some people because grants have been taken from the Council. I am rather prepared to think that we could defend that position if we wanted, but I do not want to defend it. We will meet these gentlemen on their own ground. As they say that we ought to object to the grants from Council quite as much as to the fees from local boards we will do it; we object to all. (Loud applause.) They have forced us to this position, and we are not ashamed to take of it—that the continuance of denominational schools is utterly incompatible with the establishment of a true national system. Well, sir, I do not say that we are not some of us partly to blame for the position in which we find ourselves to-day. I think Mr. Forster has done good even to the National Education League at Birmingham. I think its last programme is an immense improvement upon its former one. (Applause.) So long as we said we wanted to have the Bible in our schools we had no legitimate standing-point on which we should base our opposition to national education. The Bible is to us the most precious book that there is in the world; but to the Roman Catholic it is the denominational book. It is the Protestant book—he makes it so—we accept it—we are proud that the Bible is our Protestant book; but what right have we to force our Protestant book into the schools, a portion of which is composed partly of Roman Catholics? (Loud applause.) I wish to say simply this: that we have been hunting after this phantom of unsectarian religious education, and there is not such a thing in the world—(applause) and because we have been engaged in that wild-goose chase while our opponents have had a very distinct and definite object in view, and meant sectarian religious education, therefore, we find ourselves in the position in which we are to-night. I hope the Government won't suppose that we mean to be content with the repeal of this 25th clause. We do not mean to let the thing rest there. We intend to have that repealed · because to continue it

would be to create new vested rights, which would come in and claim compensation as soon as ever a definite settlement was made. Why, we are beset with vested rights on every side; and we are perpetually paying through the nose for the purpose of compensating these vested rights. And here comes a Government which is abolishing I don't know how many different abuses, and, while it is doing that with one hand, it is standing up and creating a new crop of vested rights, for which sooner or later we shall have to pay upon the other. Therefore, we cannot be content to let this thing have a fair trial. There is no such thing as a fair trial of injustice. (Applause.) If we had ever said that we wanted this compromise, I could understand that there should be complaint of us that we should so soon be dissatisfied with our terms. Whoever said we wanted it? I hear it said that this is a perfectly equal system, because everybody can take alike out of the national purse. The amazement to me is that a Government which in 1869 stood up manfully against the Whig and Tory proposition of concurrent endowment in Ireland should now come in and propose a system of concurrent endowment in England in relation to our schools, and then, forsooth, to think that because they have deserted their principles we are going to desert ours. I am half-sorry that this should be called a Nonconformist Conference. It is a Liberal Conference; it is a Conference of the Liberal party to protest against the desertion and treason of a small part of its members. (Applause.) The principle on which the Liberal party went to the country at the last election was that of religious equality. They have deserted it, and we stand by it, and we mean to stand by it. We do not mean to be cajoled by any party cries, but we do say this—that whoever it helps or hinders, we as Nonconformists are bound to hold fast by our position, and to say we won't let a Liberal Government come and take the education of the country, and cast it over bound hand and foot into the hands of any priesthood whatever. (Loud applause.) In the London School Board I heard a member of the Society of Friends, strange to say, tell us that he would rather that the children were educated in somebody else's religion than that they should not be educated at all. So would I, provided two things; provided that religion is not contrary to the rights and

liberties of man, not contrary to the well-being of society itself, is not intended to build up the power of a mere priesthood; and, secondly, provided that those who give the teaching themselves provide the payment. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. H. W. PARKINSON (of Rochdale), in the absence of the Rev. J. A. Picton, said:—Mr. Chairman, I think it will almost be received as a mercy by the members of this Conference when one rises up to speak to them for a moment or two, who, having nothing prepared to say, is yet not one of those who afterwards goes and says it. (Laughter.) I feel it is an act of great temerity on my part, even under the circumstances, to occupy the time of this vast audience even for a moment or two, but you may trust to my good sense not to trespass beyond legitimate bounds. Nor should I have risen even for a moment if it were not that a speaker being required to second this resolution, under the exigencies of the case, my great and absorbing interest in this question would not allow me to stand aloof. There is one point which I think it would be well that the Conference should bear in mind, and that should be set forth for the public instruction. A charge of inconsistency has been brought against Nonconformists on the education question. Many of us remember the time when we followed the leaders of voluntary education on this question; and if we find ourselves in a different position to-day it is not because of any dereliction from those great principles that we then professed, but it is because we find ourselves landed, by no fault of ours, in circumstances in which our principles have become impracticable. Ever since 1833, the Government have been hanging about the neck of this question a large and increasing system of pecuniary endowment, first of all, out of imperial grants, and now coming to the pockets of the ratepayers. Under such circumstances our first position was absolutely untenable. Our next ground is that there shall be a clear distinction, secular education being recognised as the province of the State, and religious education being recognised as not the province of the State; and I can see nothing inconsistent in our occupying that ground. Then let me say that it is a false cry which we hear on every hand, this cry from our opponents for the need of religious education. What is meant is the multiplication of a vast system of Church-and-Torifying machinery. (Laughter.) The Education

Act is not wanted either for secular or religious reasons in any place where the squire and the parson divide the parish between them. It is only wanted where there are Dissenters and Nonconformists to make head against in the behalf of a priestly system. (Hear, hear.) The religious education which will be given under this Act will be of this character, that two and two will make the requirement of the child to do its duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him;—(laughter)—that a verb agrees with—what its godfathers and godmothers promise to do for it. (Much laughter.) And when we are convinced that it is only in the interests of the maintenance of an ecclesiastical system that this cry of religion is made out, may we not ask, to whom has the religious life of this country been most indebted for 200 years gone by? How comes it that this newly-awakened zeal for religion should be manifested by the adherents of the Established Church? Let us see if we cannot find a latent but a more substantial reason for it. If we do not to-day make a stand upon this question the coils of a system will be wrapped about us which will be fatal to religion under the name of religion—(hear, hear)—which will place the religious faith, the conscience, and the daily life of the people of this country in the hands of those who are the direst enemies equally of religion and of liberty. And when I hear the objection sometimes made by those who are disposed to desert us on this question, that if you only educate the children you may trust them for coming out right in religious matters, my reply is this: From whence, except from the seats of education and learning in this country, have come those waves of feeling which threaten to lead us back into the old times of ignorance and superstition? It is the men who have taken their place under the shadows of our universities who have proved that the darkest place is just under the candlestick. (Laughter.) It is these men who have set in action that retrograde movement against which Nonconformists protest; and I am certain that it is quite as much in behalf of religion as it is of personal freedom that we are engaged in this warfare, which is as certain to be successful as we are gathered here to-night. (Cheers.)

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, of Birmingham, said: Mr. Rogers has truly remarked that we have got into our difficulties through

excessive trust in the present Government. Let me add that the way out of the difficulty is to trust in future to ourselves. (Hear, hear.) In this programme the payment of denominational fees and the State grant are treated as separate matters, though the principle is the same. I should have preferred, instead of meddling with the 25th clause, to have a resolution sweeping the whole business away. (Hear, hear.) Let me read to you a few words of Mr. Forster's at Bradford—"I know there are some among us who hold very strong opinions on this question, and who perhaps may differ from me, but I feel the question comes now so seriously before the public that any man filling the position I do would be nothing less than a traitor to his duties if he did not express his opinions, and if, having expressed those opinions, he did not strive to carry them out. The present system, or what we call a system, is one which hardly any one supports. It is unfair, capricious, and uncertain." Then, after describing his idea of a national system, he says—"My second principle is that the State should make no attempt to give religious education. My third is that in giving aid to secular education, the utmost care should be taken not to give any religious denomination any preference or advantage over another." Now, I have only to say that Mr. Forster has enormously strengthened that system which he has described as capricious and uncertain; he has given that preference of one religion over another, or rather of two religions over all the others. He holds that he has not. Let us see. At a Catholic meeting held last night at Birmingham, Bishop Ullathorne moved the first resolution: "That it is the duty of Catholics to do all they can to secure a Catholic education for the children of the poorer members of our body." Now, that is a very sensible resolution, and one that does the Catholics credit. But the Bishop should have added: "And we wish to do this at the expense of the ratepayers of Birmingham." (Laughter.) But he left that out. He goes on to state how dark had been the Catholic prospects at one time, how a few years ago he could only put his finger on three standing points which Catholics had in Birmingham; but now their prospects were brighter, and in describing their present prosperity, he speaks of the efforts of the priests as concentrated not so much on the churches as on the

schools. He dwells on the number of schools at work, of those in progress, and the further number contemplated, and it becomes evident that the support of these denominational institutions would be almost impossible without the new payments from the State and from the rates. Then with respect to the Church of England. There is a school in Birmingham in Gem-street, already receiving children on the strength of these fees. It is an industrial school, and there are five rectors and vicars, who are *ex-officio* members of the committee. The rules of the school declare that the religious and moral training shall be in accordance with the articles and formularies of the Church of England, and shall be under the superintendence of the rectors and vicar. There is also a rule that the superintendent, matron, and assistant-master, and mistress, and all the teachers, shall be members of the Church of England. This school, formerly in a languishing condition, has now 142 children and is quite full. It is receiving of the ratepayers money after the rate of £369 per annum, besides about £1,500 per annum from the State. My opinion is, that Mr. Forster has betrayed his trust, and if we Nonconformists submit to such treatment, or acquiesce in his measures, then we are worthy only of that toleration which the Government, if we may judge of it by its acts, thinks us worthy of. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. RALEIGH, who was loudly called for, said: I do not desire to speak, but some of my friends seem to think that I did not have quite justice last night. I do not see how it could have been avoided. It was a glorious meeting; somebody must have been left in the lurch, and it happened to be myself. Of course, I can only say what has been said again and again. As to what I was going to say last night, where it is gone I cannot tell —I suppose it has vanished into air. Now, have our opponents made any "concessions," as they say, to us in this matter? and have we made any compromise, or promise, or concession to them, so that we are acting unfairly or dishonourably in continuing this agitation? What concession have they made? The Prime Minister himself, more than once in Parliament, spoke of the concessions made. They have consented not to teach the Church Catechism in national schools or in schools where the secular education is paid for by the nation, to the children of those who

do not believe in it—and they call that a concession. (Laughter.) They will allow the children of Nonconformists to enter a Church school for secular education, again to be paid for richly by the nation, under the protection of a flaming sword that turns every way but the right one, which they call a conscience clause. I protest that no conscience clause which the wit of man can devise can be a protection to me or to my child but by first insulting and degrading me. (Loud cheers.) They have made the concession of accepting large additional grants of money for the building of church schools. (Laughter.) It was really so stated in the public papers; we were lost in astonishment, but there it is written down as a concession. If they continue to adhere to their present rendering and interpretation of that word, the fewer concessions we have the better. (Laughter.) I should not at all wonder if it is not some day found to be a concession by the Church of England to Nonconformity that the Minister of Education in this country has descended from a Puritan ancestry. (Much laughter.) With all respect to Mr. Forster, and gratitude to him and his colleagues as Liberal statesmen for the great measures they have given us, I would say, if this is the best that he can do in the sphere of education, then the descent from the Puritans is considerable. (Roars of laughter.) They have conceded nothing, nothing substantially; and the Government have conceded nothing since the day we began to remonstrate and protest on this question. We have, with the utmost earnestness, and with a determination as strong as is consistent with the respect which is undoubtedly their due, and which assuredly we bear to them, represented in the most urgent way the defects of this measure. We have shown more or less publicly its sectarian character and its divisive influence; we have expressed our sense of bitter disappointment, our sorrow, our regret, and any suggestions that we have made for improvement have been made in no dictatorial spirit—rather, indeed, in the mood of those who are described by the *Spectator* as very humble friends of the Government—(laughter)—we have laid these things before them, and, as far as I know (and I have known this matter from the beginning) not one clear intimation, not even one faint foreshadowing, has been given to us of the proba-

bility or even the possibility of any change in the direction which we feel to be so much needed, and which certainly is so earnestly desired. (Cheers.) They have said nothing. Our opponents have been exceedingly anxious about us, about our moral condition. (Laughter.) We have had no end of good advice. Sir John Pakington was almost tearful in his benign anxiety that we should not disturb the present delightful and most peaceful arrangement. Lord Derby, surely not with his usual fairness, which we are glad to acknowledge—was content with a cynical sneer, or at least a cynical allusion to our disappointment, our very natural disappointment, at the results of our bargain. Again I say that we made no bargain—none. True, individual men among us, who are held by us in the highest respect, expressed themselves in Parliament and out of Parliament on the side of the Government in regard to this measure, as they had a perfect right to do; and I have no doubt that their opinions were all the more influential on account of the high character of the men and of their many good works; but if the Government took them as representatives, in any large or true sense, of the Nonconformists, or of any Nonconformist bodies with which they were connected, they did so on their own responsibility. They did this not only without evidence, but as I aver, against evidence and against remonstrance and protest; for unless I misunderstand the state of the case, the great Nonconforming bodies, while they did, as Mr. Miall so justly said, seem to veer and swerve a little, did begin to go from the very first the other way, and not by bare majorities, but like the tide without one refluent wave. (Cheers.) Therefore, we are not acting a treacherous or an unfriendly part in maintaining this agitation until we accomplish our end. "Let the measure have a fair trial," it is said. How can there be a fair trial of an unfair thing? We assert that the thing itself is wrong in the point on which we touch it, wrong in principle, policy, outcome; and it never can come right by letting it grow. It will grow to more injustice; if it grows to more injustice it will grow to more ungodliness, for "the righteous Lord loveth righteousness." We planted a tree in our great national garden, as we fondly supposed, for the refreshing of our hungry children, and it does not bear the kind of fruit we had expected. What is the sense of saying, let the tree have a fair trial? I sup-

pose we must not even insert a shoot of the better kind until that wonderful day when we shall gather figs of thorns and grapes of thistles. (Laughter.) The land felt dark and chill, and we started with these same little children of the national family, as we thought, to get as near as we could in this insular position of ours, to the realms of the sun, to get a little more warmth and a little more light. And there was one who certainly proclaimed himself very competent to undertake the management of the train. But it was a night train; and we fell asleep; and now in the grey dawn of the morning we are awaking, and we see cathedral towers where, as the song says, no towers ought to be. (Laughter.) We immediately think that there has been some great mistake; we must get out; we must go back. "Don't stir! let the train have a fair trial!" (Much laughter.) It is true enough you have been speeding all night along the Great Northern Railway, and these are the towers of York Minster, but we are going further yet." How far? How long? "Well, the next station is Stonyhurst." (Roars of laughter.) "While other trains are current, this is a concurrent train." (Renewed laughter.) Now, Mr. Chairman, I should not wonder if this same Stonyhurst and that which it represents should be the means of getting us out of all this confusion and trouble; because I hold that if we go to York we ought to go to Stonyhurst. (Hear, hear.) And, happily, the whole nation, at least, a great part of it, seems, in the meantime, to start back from that terminus; but we must make the whole nation see and acknowledge that in pure logic, and in justice as well as logic, if we go to the one we ought to go to the other—that is to say, that if we endow denominational teaching in England, we ought to endow it in Scotland; which might not have been very difficult a year ago, which would have been perfectly easy, but which, I am glad to know from some recent information, would be a good deal more difficult now than it would have been even six months ago. They say, you know, it takes a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's mind. I can tell you this, that be it easy or difficult to get an argument into a Scotchman's mind, if you once get the argument in, with its corresponding conviction, you will find it a very hard thing to get it out again. (Cheers.) If we could only get Scotland right in this question then

all would be right. (Hear, hear.) I have nothing but thanks to those Roman Catholic prelates who speak out plainly and tell us what they conceive to be their just rights; and I say it is impossible to show that they are not asking for what are their rights, and that we are not unjust and tyrannous and mean in withholding them, unless we amend our ways and retrace our own erring steps. There is only one way out of all this. Let all Churches be disestablished—(loud cheers)—and then if any one Church shall develope as we have been told the Roman Catholic religion has developed in history, in anti-social mischief or anything inconsistent with the rights and liberties of a free people, it can be dealt with in its own nature and for what it is, not as a bad form of religion, but as a bad thing, which a just and free State cannot suffer to exist beyond certain limits. And let the State give us what the State can give us far better than any religious community, any Church of whatever kind, a good secular education, that is to say, an education in those branches of human knowledge in which all rational persons are agreed, the teaching of which, therefore, may be enforced by a compulsion that will never be needed when it is once known to exist, and for which you may justly tax the whole community without the possibility of injuring any reasonable, I might say any rational, conscience. And let the responsibility for religious teaching and for the Bible and the use of it be thrown upon those who love them and who are the appointed agents for their propagation in the world. Make new appeals to the love and loyalty of those who believe in the upper world and in the unseen Master. Make new claims, and call for new sacrifices, and I am sure that the result will be an increase, an improvement both in quality and in amount, not deterioration, not decline, of true religious education in England. (Cheers.) Then I foresee that in a happier time than this—God grant it may not be so far away!—we shall stand together as a people, these conflicts behind us ended, hand-in-hand, those who are now opposed to each other, and shall sing together some notes of that old, old song, "The Lord hath rid us from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood. Our sons are as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner-stones,

polished after the similitude of a palace." (Loud and long-continued cheering.)

Mr. W. WARBURTON (Salford): I wish to mention only one or two facts. I have taken some trouble, with regard to Salford, to make known the fact stated by Dr. Enoch Mellor last night, that, after paying for 1,737 children not previously paid for, the attendance at the schools is 713 less than previously. There are members of School Boards present, and I wish to suggest to them to make the attempt to ascertain these statistics in each locality. The state of Salford is only an example of the state of many other towns as to the diminution of attendance since the Boards began to pay school fees. The thing is perfectly natural. Parents keep their children at home, and say they are too poor to pay for them, in order that the Board may be induced to pay. There is one school in Salford that will make a profit of from £100 to £200 during the next twelve months from Government grants and fees from the School Board. I mention also with regret that there is at least one Nonconformist school in Salford (a Congregational one) not only receiving Government grants, but also receiving fees from the School Board. (Shame!) I hope that one result of this Conference will be that all such things will disappear. We are taunted with these facts, and what is the use of talking against them so long as they are permitted to exist? We have a number of Churchmen on the Salford Board who have been trained under the late Canon Stowell, men who all their lives have been crying out "No Popery," and they are now invariably found in accord with the Catholic members of the Board; voting money without hesitation, and speaking, if necessary, in defence of Catholics receiving fees. Such inconsistency, I was going to say hypocrisy, is sure to tell in the end with the electors. We were defeated before, not so much by the cumulative vote, but because we had not a distinct and united platform. Among forty candidates in Salford, only myself and perhaps one other gentleman took our stand on the secular platform. Let us all be united in future on that issue and we shall succeed. With regard to future Parliamentary elections, it is my intention not to vote for any candidate who will not pledge himself to use every exertion to change the present Education Bill into a national instead of a denominational one; and I don't intend to pay the education rate under the

existing system. (Hear, hear.) I have been told since I came on the platform that Mr. Harvey Adams has had his goods seized, and that the article taken was a weather glass which many years ago failed to indicate the state of the weather. (Laughter.) I hope we shall be prepared to make all needful sacrifices. We shall surely succeed if only we are true to our principles and trust to ourselves. (Cheers.)

Mr. H. M. HEATH, of Hackney: Mr. Chairman, I wish to say one word on the secular question merely. I regret greatly that Mr. Picton is not here. We fought a battle for him in London, and secured it. We were opposed by many who called themselves Nonconformists; but now almost every man of them has come round to us. Many of us have been sent to Coventry because we stood by Mr. Picton on the purely secular principle. Dr. Raleigh, to his great honour be it said, was the man who helped us; we could not have done without him. He gave us a letter which overshadowed the other phases of Nonconformity in our district, and we were enabled to secure an advocate of a pure secular system for rate-supported schools. Twenty years ago Richard Cobden spoke almost on this very spot, and on this very question. He said that as a Churchman he had come to this conclusion, that believing education should be recognised by the State for poor children, still religion must be put out of rate-supported schools. He appealed to a gentleman of high character, the hon. member for Leeds,—and he said then, "Mr. Baines, you stand in our way." (Hear, hear.) Rely upon it that after all, it is our duty, as God-fearing men, to teach religion, and not that of the State to teach it, and make people who do not believe in it pay for it. Make up your minds that every child in this land shall be educated, but keep secular education for the rate-supported schools, and religion for the Church. (Applause.)

REV. SONLEY JOHNSTONE, Merthyr: I wish to strengthen the resolution by the addition of one word. When it was proposed by Mr. Gladstone to separate the denominational schools from the School Boards he suggested that, as a compensation, they should have an increase in the grant; and I have heard it rumoured that there may be some such offer made in reference to this matter, that the 25th clause will be repealed, but that additional money

will be given from the Consolidated Fund. Then, again, I know of one School Board that has already framed a bye-law providing that the fees should be paid not for the children of indigent parents but only for such children as passed the Government examination, and upon this plea, that the money will then be given for purely secular education. Now that there may be no misunderstanding and no misrepresentation in future, I should like to have inserted the word "unconditional,"—to bring forward a motion for the unconditional repeal of the 25th clause of the Elementary Education Act.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY: The Committee will accept that alteration.

Mr. R. W. DALE: It may not be known that Mr. Harvey Adams is on the platform. I may perhaps state that when the bailiffs went to levy the distress they did not take a Bible. There are too many precepts in that against the kind of proceeding in which they were engaged. They did not take a copy of any of the great poets of the country; for it would be hardly possible to open a page of any one of the great poets of England which does not breathe the spirit of freedom. They did not take a couch, for people who do work of this sort, when they sleep, are likely to have bad dreams. They took a weather-glass, and I am told that the index is pointing to "Stormy." (Laughter and cheers.)

Mr. HARVEY ADAMS then came forward, and was enthusiastically received by the meeting. He said: I feel considerable interest in this question, having for a large number of years taken a deep interest in the education of the youth of my native parish. I fully appreciate the great advantage of a sound and complete education, and have full sympathy with religious, sectarian, and theological teaching, provided the State has no connection with the theological power. The Act has greatly disappointed the fond ambition of Nonconformists. What we want, and what we are determined to have ere we ground our arms, is a universal system of elementary instruction. We will not have a system that shall place the youths of various parishes under different advantages or disadvantages; but a system of equality and uniformity that shall give to all our gutter children in the kingdom a sound elementary education, and when the youth's mind is pre-

pared for the consideration of creeds and formularies and faiths, then let the various denominations in the Christian Church step forward, and, by voluntary effort, use their various powers and agencies to promote their own denominational interest. As a Nonconformist, I am determined to resist to the utmost I possibly can any imposition upon my conscience, to promote sectarianism and denominational feeling. (Applause.)

The resolution was unanimously adopted as amended.

The Rev. CHARLES WILLIAMS, of Accrington, then read the following paper on

STATE GRANTS TO DENOMINATIONAL DAY-SCHOOLS.

Protestant Dissenters have never taken kindly to the system of State-aided denominational day-schools. It was impossible that they should favour a system which was originated to effect their defeat, and which has been perpetuated in the interest of the Anglican and Roman Episcopal Churches. In the first decade of this century, Nonconformists and Liberal Churchmen, led by Joseph Lancaster, proposed to give an unsectarian and efficient day-school education to the children of the poor. They worked in virgin soil. The *Quarterly Review*, in 1811, then, as now, the advocate of monopolies and prescriptions, and the antagonist of equal rights and a free religion, was constrained to confess that both Government and clergy had failed to provide parish schools (see vol. vi. p. 291). "Darkness covered the land and gross darkness the people." The Nonconformists of those times were broad-minded and large-hearted men. They desired to educate and not to proselytise. "Above all things," wrote Joseph Lancaster, "education ought not to be made subservient to the propagation of the peculiar tenets of any sect beyond its own members; it then becomes undue influence, like the strong taking advantage of the weak." (*Ibid.* p. 275.) To the amazement of the Lords, especially of the lord-bishops, King George the Third extended his patronage to the schools of these "heretics" and "sectaries," and in 1808, the "Royal Lancasterian Institution for Promoting the Education of the Poor" was formed. The society prospered. "Schools were established in different parts of the country," wrote an *Edinburgh Reviewer* in 1810, "and tens of thousands of poor children were receiving the inestimable blessings of education." (Vol. xvii. p. 69.) Prelates,

peers, and parsons took the alarm. "The poor are being taught," cried affrighted Tories; "the poor are being taught by sectaries," responded the priests of the Establishment. At first an attempt was made to arrest the progress of education, but it failed. Ecclesiastics could not persuade George the Third that his subjects would be less loyal because they could read their Bibles. Next the opponents of popular education took counsel on the question, whether the stream of knowledge might not be diverted. Light broke in upon the minds of landlords and archdeacons. They resolved to establish schools in which the children should be taught to do homage to the squire, to reverence the priest, and to say the Church Catechism. This is no exaggeration. The *Quarterly* testifies:—"A few persons became alarmed at seeing how rapidly a system of educating the poorer classes was becoming general, by which they were bred up, not indeed in the principles of Dissent, but certainly not in the tenets of the Church of England." (Vol. vi. p. 287). Dr. Bell hastened to the rescue. He faithfully promised his lordly and clerical patrons, "that the children of the poor should not be educated in an expensive manner, or even taught to write and cipher," lest, he added, "those doomed to the drudgery of daily labour" should be rendered "discontented and unhappy in their lot" (*Edinburgh Review*, Vol. xvii. p. 63); and so he won the Tories. He more than hinted "that the instruction of youth should be committed to the parochial clergy, and that schoolmasters should be licensed by the bishop" (*Ibid.* p. 86); and thus he secured the suffrages of the priests. On these representations, the aristocracy and the Church consented, in 1811, to the establishment of "The National Society for the Education of the Children of the Poor in the Principles of the Church of England." It is not surprising that Protestant Dissenters look with disfavour on a system which was brought into existence for the express purpose of proselytising the people; but it is surprising that such a system should find its chief supporter in the representative of a Dissenting constituency, a member of a Government which applied the principle of religious equality to Ireland, and has made our Universities national, and one born and trained in the Society of Friends.

In 1839, the State inaugurated the system of grants in aid of

these schools, and the schools taught on the Lancasterian system. Roman Catholics or any denominational schools were eligible to receive grants, but purely secular schools were excluded from the patronage of the Privy Council. A Whig Ministry thus established a system of concurrent endowment of denominational day-schools. Many Dissenters could not, without a compromise of principle, accept a grant clogged with such conditions. Others preferred voluntaryism in education. Of course the lion's share of the annual Parliamentary grant went to the Established Church. From 1839 to 1870 that Church received education grants, £6,976,695, building grants £1,237,363. The total expenditure of the State on day-schools during the thirty-one years was £13,419,897, of which sum the managers of the Church of England schools received £8,214,058. The Education Act of 1870 has yet further extended this system. In the thirty-one years just referred to, grants were made towards the cost of building 5,016 and of enlarging 2,319 schools; but, under a clause in the Forster Act, applications were made within a few months for 5,000 additional grants. That Act should be denominated, not an Act to provide for Public Elementary Education in England and Wales, but an Act to consolidate and extend, at the expense of the public, the day-schools of the Anglican and Roman Episcopal Churches in this land. In 1870 there were 10,214 religious day-schools in receipt of State aid. The Education Act will, in a year or two, make the number at least 15,000. We desire and demand that the State, after due notice given, shall cease to aid these schools. The Right Hon. Robert Lowe—would that Mr. Forster would exchange posts with him!—declared the other day, in Yorkshire, "that in promoting the denominational system. . . the Government had made a great and gross mistake." If so, the present Government should repent of the blunder, and "bring forth fruit meet for repentance." The system fails where education is most needed, in the agricultural districts. In 1867 there were 8,219 parishes separately maintaining their own poor, with a population of less than 500 each. 7,915 of these parishes were without a State-aided school. And even if there were a school in every parish, in the case of the overwhelming majority of parishes, the school would be controlled by the clergyman; and the Education Committee of the Privy Council would refuse to

assist a second school, because of the insufficiency of the population to support more than one. We are not content to place the children of village Dissenters in schools managed by parish priests. It is allowed that the Education Act has given us a Conscience Clause and a Time-table. A Conscience Clause is the principle of toleration applied to day-schools. We want, not toleration, but equality. Nonconformists are weary of this ceaseless separation of the precious from the vile. The State should take no cognisance of creed or Churches in colleges for the rich or in schools for the poor. Some of us almost agree with Archdeacon Denison, that the Conscience Clause is "an invention of the devil." Our remedy, however, differs from his. We would apply the same rule to St. Andrew or St. Peter's parochial schools as to Christ Church at Oxford and Trinity College at Cambridge. Whatever is public should be unsectarian. And hence we would make our public elementary schools undenominational.

This State-aided denominational system should be either abolished or extended to Ireland. The newspapers inform us that the Established Kirk and the Free Church in Scotland alike wish that a catechism should be taught in the public schools of that part of the kingdom. Cardinal Cullen and his bishops insist that "in all schools exclusively Catholic" there shall be "the removal of all restriction on the use of Catholic books and religious emblems." Why is it that England is willing to assent to the request of the Scotch and refuses to grant the petition of the Irish? It is simply because Scotland is Protestant and Ireland Roman Catholic. And yet the Irish Catholic has an equal claim with the Scotch Presbyterian and the English Episcopalian to the support of his denominational day-school. Religious equality requires the aid of all or none. We are not prepared to subsidise Roman Catholicism. A large proportion of Catholic schools in Ireland and a goodly number in England are taught by members of religious orders. All of us honour the conscientiousness, the devotion, the zeal of these ascetics. But their vows bind them to seek the subjection of those they teach to the authority of the Church; that is the priests. The second volume of the "Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Primary Education (Ireland)" abundantly illustrates this fact. One Assistant Commissioner quotes a rule.

which is "most thoroughly and successfully carried out" by the Christian Brothers:—"Above all things, the Brothers are to recollect that the instruction of the children in piety and religion is one great and main end of their institute. This is to be their first and principal care in regard to their pupils" (p. 315). Another assistant commissioner visited a school in Belfast, and "found the faces of all the boys turned towards the image of the Virgin. All were kneeling on forms with clasped hands. One boy as leader was saying a prayer, clause by clause, and the rest were repeating it after him." The commissioner pertinently adds, "It is idle to talk of a Conscience Clause in such a case" (p. 239). If the State aids this class of schools, especially if it provides, as in the Education Act, that there shall be no inquiry into the religious instruction given, it practically invites priests and their ascetic helpers to make public day schools a passage to the confessional and a highway to Rome. Only last week the Dublin Synod of the Free Church of Ireland resolved—"That we regard the demand made by the Roman Catholic hierarchy for absolute and uncontrolled authority over the instruction to be given in schools supported by the State as one opposed to the best interests of the people, and one which would ultimately be subversive of civil and religious liberty." The Wesleyan Education Committee has recently passed an equally decisive motion against State aid to denominational schools in Ireland. Protestant Episcopalians sympathise with Irish Protestants, and most of them denounce the anticipated compliance with Cardinal Cullen's demand. Methodists to a man repudiate Government grants to Romanism. But how can they protest with their own hands full of State money to be spent on denominational schools? "Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Some of us wait to see whether Protestantism or greed of State patronage and pay is the stronger motive with these Christian men. We doubt Churchmen. With them it has generally been endowment first and principle next. But "we are persuaded better things of" Wesleyans, "though we thus speak," for it is impossible that they should sell Ireland to the priests for the miserable pittance of £40,000. received in the shape

of an annual grant in aid of their day schools. We, too, gentlemen, have somewhat to give up before we can come into court with clean hands to oppose the subsidising of Roman Catholic Schools in Ireland. The objection to the National system urged by Irish priests is, that, being religious and yet unsectarian, it favours, and was meant to favour, Protestantism. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool, though he prefers the denominational system to any other, regards secular schools as less injurious to his Church and creed than schools in which the Bible only is read. I allow the force of these pleas. It will be conceded that the State should not permit the teaching of Hindooism or Mohammedanism in the Government schools of India. And, on the same ground, and for the same reason, I would not ask the State to teach, or to tolerate the teaching of any creed in a public school. There should be nothing taught in any public school or college for or against any man's religious opinions, be he Christian, Turk, Infidel, or Jew. We, at least, are pledged to deal out the same measure to all. I regard concurrent endowment as religious equality *plus* latitudinarianism, *plus* licentiousness. The one escape from it is by affirming that the State shall not introduce, or allow others to introduce into any public school, the Shasters of Hindooism, the Koran of Mohammedanism, the Mass Book of Popery, the Catechism of the Church, or the Bible of Protestants.

Let no one be fearful of the effects of pure secularism in State Education. Hitherto, Governments, by their officious intermeddling with sacred things, have hindered rather than helped the progress of the Gospel. Our Sunday-school teachers, our ministers and missionaries, our many voluntary agencies, are quite competent for the work of religious instruction. We plead for a secular system of day-schools, because we reverence the faith and deprecate its manipulation by senators or statesmen; because it is our strong conviction that Government officials mar when they meddle with the work of religious instruction; because we believe that the Bible is more degraded than honoured by being associated with tasks which are irksome to flesh and blood in the days of childhood; because, in our judgment, Christ and his Church, without the aid of State prescription or pay, are equal to the training of children as of their parents for the kingdom of heaven. It is the intense earnestness

of our piety which makes us secularists in this matter of State education. Let no one be frightened at the word "secular." It does not represent a spectre from the world of evil spirits. Romanists and Anglicans talk of it as if it were an incarnation of the wicked one, or at least an unclean thing. They forget, perhaps they do not know, that the secular may be as dear as the sacred to the heart of the Divine Being. It is time men learnt the lesson that we should eat our daily bread, as we take the Sacrament, to the glory of God, that we should teach youth to read and cipher, as we preach the Gospel, in the service of the Heavenly Father. We hold that the State may do the will of Heaven by providing for every child an efficient day-school secular *curriculum*, but it contravenes that will, when it secularises the sacred by allowing its paid teachers, not necessarily godly men, and possibly unbelievers, to instruct children in religious truth. If we take a firm stand, not as Nonconformists, but as Englishmen, on the simple and broad principle of secularism in State Education, we cannot fail to win over to our side the people of England, and then we shall witness the conversion of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster, though "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for" Mr. Forster to become a real Liberal in matters educational. Even Mr. Powell, the Tory candidate for the seat which we all hope Mr. Holden will secure, can "see men as trees walking." On Monday night last, at Bradford, he said it was indispensable "that in Ireland there should be a complete system of secular education." A little more enlightenment, and the Conservatives will see that such a system is the only possible solution of "the religious difficulty" in England. "An Old Whig," writing from Brooks's on the 12th instant, told the editor of the *Times*, "Most men of mark among Liberals receive as sound doctrine that the best system of national education is founded on secular instruction." When old Whigs are so clear-sighted as this, is not the path of duty made plain and straight before our eyes? We should cast in our lot with the party of progress, contending (1) for public, as distinguished from denominational management of public elementary schools; and (2) that, in public schools, secular instruction only be given by the salaried teachers, or by any other person, in school hours. Protestant Nonconformists may thus

once again take their place in the front rank of the men who fight for liberty, and render real and effective service to what Mr. Lowe eloquently describes as "the great, the noble, the holy cause of the education of the children of the poor." (Loud cheers.)

Professor F. E. ANTHONY, of Western College, moved the following resolution :—

"That this Conference protests against the payment of public money to schools under private, irresponsible, and denominational management, as inconsistent with the due recognition of the principles of religious equality, and as rendering impossible the development of a truly national system of education, and is of opinion that all public money voted for the purposes of education should be administered through representatives of the people popularly elected. That this Conference is of opinion that in any national system of education, the School Board and the State should make provision solely for the secular instruction which all children may receive in common, and that the responsibility of the religious education of each district (which in every case should be given by teachers other than those employed in the ordinary work of public schools) should be thrown upon voluntary effort."

He said: In the resolution I have just now read we have put very forcibly and very clearly and very fully the indictment, serious as it is, which we enter against this Elementary Education Act of the year 1870. By a most extraordinary inconsistency, which to this time has not been fully explained if explained at all, we have had an Act carried through the House as an unsectarian Act which seems to be of such a character that its only evident issue is to give support not to unsectarian schools, but to sectarian. You will remember that in the Bill first introduced into the House there was a clause by which School Boards had power to make grants to sectarian schools. So great was the opposition to that that Mr. Gladstone withdrew it. Why he should have introduced it in an unsectarian Act we cannot understand; but having introduced it and then being compelled to withdraw it, it was necessary to make some compensation to the sectarian schools, and so he introduced in the new code an increased grant, up to the amount of 50 per cent. So, again, with regard to building grants; he made much of withdrawing building grants from the schools, but he gave the six months' grace for application of those grants, by which the country will be so covered with sectarian schools that the necessity for the sectarian schools. to a very great extent, seems to be altogether re-

moved. We have in the resolution the word "irresponsible." Are the sectarian schools under the working of this Act irresponsible? Mr. Forster has made much of their being under no sectarian inspection. What is the result of that? Why, that the schools are able to teach anything and everything of what they call religious dogma, and have no inspection whatever with regard to it, so that we do not even know, except by what we find from the children, the kind of teaching which they receive at the hands of their teachers. That which seemed to be a favour is, in fact, a fresh cause of grievance, and these schools are positively irresponsible to those who pay the money, and we have this new doctrine introduced into our polity that it is possible for private bodies of men to receive public money from the hands of those to whom they are not responsible for their application of it. We are justified in the ground which we are taking, and in exercising the most perfect confidence as to the result of our agitation of this matter, and for this reason—we are not asking for anything for ourselves, not seeking to serve any selfish purpose: we are simply seeking that all may stand upon the same footing, all may be treated on equal terms, that no one man should be favoured above another. Our knowledge of religious movements and religious activity will teach us this, that he who goes forth to the battle with unselfish motives or unselfish principles to fight the battle against selfish motives and selfish principles may be assured of the victory; that broad and sound principles will hold their own against narrow prejudice, and selfish interest. In this agitation which is now growing through our country, a process of education is being carried on which will end speedily in our realising, and more speedily than some of the most sanguine of us have dared to hope,—that day dream of a patriot statesman, a free Church in a free country. (Cheers.)

Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL seconded the resolution, and said: I believe that this Conference will have given an answer to an accusation contained in to-day's *Times* brought against us by the Bishop of Gloucester, who asserts that we are claiming not equality but supremacy. The tone of every speaker has been that of equal rights, and no supremacy for any party in the community, and in order logically to carry that principle into effect we bring forward

those resolutions which you have heard read from the platform. We hoped under a system of National Education introduced by a Liberal Government, to see existing schools that had been nominally erected to educate people gradually transferred from their present sectional management to the control of popularly elected School Boards. But as a school manager myself I can say that with the present system it would be unwise indeed in those who are conducting schools on truly undenominational and secular principles to transfer those institutions to bodies which are elected for sectarian purposes; and until we have so changed the constitution and power of the School Boards that even if they wished they should not be able to use their powers for sectarian purposes, we must continue our separate action as we are doing this day. But there is a duty for us, not merely to criticise that which has been done, but to come forward with positive recommendations of what ought to be done in the future, and the resolutions that we are now discussing do put before us a practical suggestion which will be, I feel convinced, a happy issue out of all our present misfortunes. We propose, according to these resolutions, that existing schools should no longer receive from the Government aid in their work as long as they maintain that in their ordinary teaching sectarian principles shall be inculcated. We maintain that they should be for the purpose of ordinary secular teaching transferred to the School Board, and that the School Board should have the power of giving secular instruction only in the hours during which they have the control over the schools. No doubt at first we shall be met by cries of spoliation and injustice, but where we remember that the country at large has contributed largely to the erection of the schools and to their maintenance, only for the purpose of giving secular instruction, we must say that it is nothing but fair and just that money thus given by the public should be managed by responsible persons who will see that it is applied to the purpose for which it is granted, and for that purpose only, we therefore must say that it is right and just that our representatives in Parliament should see to it that in any amendment of the Elementary Education Act this point shall be carefully looked to, so that we may have in the management of our School Boards the principle of united secular and separate religious instruction clearly and distinctly

laid down. In various ways of late years, we have been able to remove tests and disabilities, but in this new Education Act we are introducing one new test of a most dangerous character, for if the School Boards are to give religious instruction, they will conscientiously feel that they must choose as teachers those who represent their theological opinions. We are, therefore, introducing, as Mr. Disraeli truly said, a new sacerdotal caste, and introducing a test for the teacher that has not hitherto been recognised—a danger which I trust Nonconformists will be firm in resisting, and successful in opposing. I remember not very long ago, when visiting Ireland, having a conversation upon this topic of our system of education with one of the bishops of the then Established Church, and he very candidly declared to me that he was quite prepared to go in for purely secular education for that country. I congratulated him upon the breadth of his views, and said, "I only wish that you could inoculate some of the bishops in our island with your liberal sentiments." "Ah," said his lordship, "it is a different thing there than here. Here denominational education means Roman Catholicism, and there it means Anglicanism." I must say that that candid confession was one that strengthened me in the opinions I hold, for I do not wish to see Anglicanism, Roman Catholicism, or Presbyterianism endowed in our schools. (Applause.) But what we do wish to see is a broad and liberal system of secular education brought within the reach of every child of the community, and brought in such a way that every one can enjoy the privileges of that instruction without his rights of conscience being interfered with. No system but that which we propose to-night can really and truly attain this end, and all the expenditure of energy shown by the Nonconformists of this country will be worthily employed if the results of our meeting here be such as to impress the Government with a sense of our real determination not to shirk the difficulties that lie before us, but without consideration of mere party ties, to keep in view those principles which alone make Liberalism dear to us, even if we have to sacrifice our ability to support the men for whom we have voted in days gone by. (Loud applause.)

The Rev. ALFRED TILLY (Cardiff) moved that the latter part of the first of the two combined resolutions should read thus:—

"Demands that, after due notice, no public money shall be voted for the purposes of education except to schools administered through representatives of the people popularly elected."

The Rev. F. SONLEY JOHNSTONE (Merthyr), seconded the amendment. He said: We are not putting sufficient force into our resolution when we confine ourselves simply to such a phrase as "is of opinion." The amendment proposed exactly expresses what we have all along insisted upon, and I think, therefore, that we should state what our demand is in the clearest manner possible. The latter part shuts the teachers out from all teaching of religion, and I think we ought to alter it. I would also suggest that Mr. Tilly should include in it the following alteration in the latter part of the resolution:—

"That the Conference insists that in any national system of education the School Board and the State shall make provisions solely for the secular instruction, which all children may receive in common; that the responsibility of the religious education of every district shall be left to voluntary effort, and that no religious instruction shall be given by the teachers of elementary schools in their official capacity, or in connection with the ordinary work of the public schools."

Mr. MIALL, M.P.: I put it very earnestly to the good sense and to the patriotism of the assembly to get into no wrangling about verbal alterations. The resolutions have been drawn up by those who have given great time to the consideration of all the phases of the subject of which they treat. They substantially express all that the gentlemen propose to express, and if you get into a debate about mere verbal expressions, and allow the Conference to disperse itself without coming to a vote upon the most important subject that will be brought under notice, I shall say you are not the men of business you ought to be. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. R. W. DALE: I believe the mover and seconder are prepared to accept a slight change in the resolution, which will read as follows:—"And we, therefore, claim that all public moneys voted for the purpose of education should be administered through representatives of the people popularly elected." That is something more than an expression of opinion, and I trust Mr. Johnstone will accept it as adequately indicating that we do not merely express opinion, but ask for action. So far as the second amendment is

concerned, I do most earnestly request the Conference to believe that the very utmost care has been given in determining the form in which the resolutions should be submitted to the Conference. The amendment Mr. Johnstone has submitted would leave matters open to the most dangerous abuse in the appointment of a schoolmaster. It is perfectly certain to my mind that the language which Mr. Johnstone has suggested would not sufficiently prevent what we all desire to prevent, namely, a bargain between the sects and the schoolmaster that he shall practically teach their faith, though not exactly within school hours and not, it may be said, *ex officio*. We are anxious that the schoolmaster of the parish should never be at the disposal of the predominant sect of the parish for teaching the creed of that sect in the building which the parish has erected. I entreat the Conference to remember that these are the gravest resolutions of the Conference, so far as to-day is concerned, and it is of the highest importance that before the Conference is diminished by the necessary leaving of many of its members, we should come to a direct issue. If the two resolutions, on the whole, fairly express your judgment, I beseech you not to risk the expression of that judgment for the sake of a verbal alteration.

Rev. A. TILLY: I should be very sorry to bring any discordant element into the Conference, and am quite willing to accept the modifications of the resolution Mr. Dale has suggested. (Applause.)

The first portion of the resolution was then adopted as amended.

Rev. F. SONLEY JOHNSTONE: I will now move my amendment, and to avoid the error into which Mr. Dale seems to think we may fall, I will leave out the word "ordinary," which I read toward the end.

Mr. JOSEPH SPENCE (Manchester): I will second the amendment, for it involves an important principle; whilst I object to religious teaching with State money, with all my heart and soul, I object also to the shutting out of the schoolmaster from the pale of responsible men in the performance of his daily duties by any State authority, and therefore, and with all the power of my nature, would desire to impress upon the meeting the importance of leaving out the parenthesis in this resolution, and hold that every man in every station of life is pledged by his loyalty to Jesus Christ to bring to bear his religion in all the daily acts of his life, whether he eats

or drinks, teaches or works in any department of life. No man who is loyal to Christ can at the dictation of any human authority undertake to suppress his religion.

Rev. ROBERT HARLEY (Leicester): I would suggest the omission of the words within brackets. I feel that we have no right when a man becomes a teacher in a Board School to say to him, "You must not henceforth assist in the religious education of the children," because if he will do it voluntarily, then I have no more right to exclude him than any other man whatever. If we pass this resolution in the form in which it is presented to us to-night I feel that we shall then have placed ourselves in a wrong position, and that we are going beyond the extreme of our own principles. Our principles do not require that we should render incapable of giving religious instruction any man who is employed by the State. I recommend very strongly that the amendment should be withdrawn, and that we should simply omit the words within brackets.

Mr. JOHNSTONE withdrew his amendment in favour of the suggestion of Mr. Harley.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY: We cannot accept Mr. Harley's proposal.

Rev. ROBERT BRUCE (Huddersfield): I will second Mr. Harley's proposition.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY: We mean distinctly this, and it is a very clear point, that if you permit a sect to employ a national school teacher, you shut up the profession of a teacher to a sectarian class, the teacher will be the servant of the sect, not the national schoolmaster. That is the great point that we must absolutely defend.

Mr. BRUCE: What is meant by saying "which in every case should be given by teachers other than those employed in the ordinary work of public schools!" According to that parenthesis, no teacher in a Board School can be a Sunday School teacher. I would earnestly suggest to Mr. Dale, that he should withdraw that parenthetical sentence. I do not see that you have any more right to bind down the teacher against voluntary effort on behalf of religion, any more than Mr. Dale, who is a member of a School Board.

Mr. R. W. DALE: I have been requested to re-explain my previous explanation. Let me say it never entered into the minds

of those who drew this resolution, that under it a schoolmaster could be prevented from voluntarily giving religious instruction to any children that he might be able to induce to receive it, either on the week day, out of school hours, or on the Sunday. What we are anxious to prevent is this, the employment of the schoolmaster by a sect to give religious instruction. (Hear, hear.) We desire that he should not be made the salaried servant of a sect. We do not want any School Board in engaging a schoolmaster. to be able to say, "As a condition of your being engaged, you must be willing an hour before school to teach the Church Catechism, on behalf of the clergyman in the parish, who will give you perhaps £5 a year for doing it." We want to interfere with the possibility, if we can, of any such arrangement. No doubt it is very difficult to prevent subtle arrangements that the law cannot reach; but if we can lay down as a principle that the schoolmaster is to be the servant of the Board, and is not to be the servant of a sect outside, we think it of great importance. The omission of the words within brackets, would leave the whole case hopelessly open. I think you might omit the words where they stand, and perhaps the case might be fully covered, if we read the resolution thus:—

"The responsibility of the religious education of each district should be thrown upon voluntary effort; but the teacher engaged in the ordinary work of the public school shall not be employed for that purpose."

Rev. Mr. HARLEY: Our proposal is to throw the entire responsibility of the religious education in each district upon voluntary effort; but the parenthetical clause shuts out those teachers who are engaged in the ordinary work of day schools. The intention, no doubt, is what Mr. Dale has expressed in his speech; but as he will not alter the resolution to express his intention, I must press my amendment.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY: I would suggest the omission of the clause in parenthesis, and that the resolution should read—

"Shall be thrown upon voluntary effort, and that no schoolmaster engaged in the ordinary work of the school shall be required, or employed to give such religious education."

Mr. HARLEY: I will accept that, if the word "employed" is omitted

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: It is of extreme practical importance that the words "or employed" shall be kept in the resolution. I desire it for the protection of the teacher, and not for the limitation of his liberties. When once we have, as we soon shall have, universally School Boards, the majority of the School Boards in this country will chiefly consist of representatives of Church of England principles, and if they may employ the teacher to give religious instruction, they never will employ any teacher who is not a member of the Church of England. In that way you will restrict the profession of teachers to members almost entirely of that sect. (Applause.)

Rev. A. HANNAY: I do not understand that it is competent for any School Board to raise the question of *requiring* or *employing* a teacher in religious education. The resolution contemplates a state of things in which the whole matter of religious education is relegated to voluntary effort, taken altogether out of the hands of the School Board. There can be no question in the state of things which the resolution contemplates of the Board as a board either *requiring* their teacher to give religious education or *employing* the teacher for religious education. The matter will be entirely out of their hands, but I submit, if we pass the resolution as it stands, it would not be competent for a gentleman who was a teacher in a Board School to become a voluntary religious teacher in the Sunday School of the church with which he happened to be connected, because the whole matter of religious teaching is relegated to the Sunday Schools or to free effort in connection with the public school. I must say I cannot understand the difficulty our friends have in allowing the parenthetical sentence to be simply cancelled. If it be an important point, this, of not employing Board School teachers in this way, then I do not think it should be passed in a parenthesis in a resolution of this kind. I must certainly vote for the dropping of the parenthetical clause.

Mr. R. W. DALE: I am so anxious that we should have a clear vote on the general resolution, that although I still attach great importance to what is covered by the brackets, and although I believe every member of this Conference sustains what we mean by those words, I trust the mover of the resolution and the seconder will consent to withdraw them.

Mr. RICHARD: I think we are all agreed upon this, that we should concur in the sentiments which Mr. Dale and those who prepared this resolution meant to convey, but it seems to me quite clear that they have failed to convey their meaning in such a manner as shall be unobjectionable, and, therefore, I earnestly trust that you will accept the offer that has been made by Mr. Dale to withdraw the parenthetical clause altogether. (Hear, hear.)

The Rev. ALEXANDER MACLAREN: I would suggest that discussion be adjourned till to-morrow morning, in order that the secretaries may prepare a little more deliberately a form of words that will include all that has been suggested, and will unite the Conference in a resolution upon the purport of which they are practically agreed, and upon which unanimity will not be secured by the withdrawal of the clause.

Professor ANTHONY: After what I have heard with regard to this parenthetical clause, although I perfectly appreciate the difficulty anticipated by the secretaries and explained by Mr. Dale with regard to the employment of the schoolmaster in the parish, who is himself a Churchman, perhaps by appointment; at the same time there is another phase to the question, and that is this, that with such a restriction as you have here, and as it is generally understood, you would put a difficulty at once in the way of the very men who of all others we wish to see our schoolmasters. No Christian man would sensibly, to follow out his profession as a schoolmaster, submit to be put in the position of not being able, if he had an opportunity, of teaching religion, and, therefore, putting the one practical difficulty against the other, I must beg to withdraw from the resolution as it stands and I shall vote for the exclusion of the clause.

The resolution was then put, omitting the parenthetical clause, and was carried unanimously.*

The Conference then adjourned.

* A resolution expressing more fully and clearly what was intended to be expressed in the "parenthetical clause" which was withdrawn, was submitted to the Conference on Thursday evening, and carried with one dissentient.

THURSDAY MORNING.

THE Conference reassembled at half-past ten at the Friends' Meeting-house, which, as before, was crowded in every part. The chair was taken by Mr. W. Middlemore, of Birmingham.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the Conference, said: We should have been incredulous had we been told two years ago that nearly 2,000 delegates, representing Nonconformists from all parts of the country, would, ere long, assemble in Manchester to seek the redress of injustice inflicted on them by a Liberal Government, and to devise means for their future protection. But so it is. And from the spirit manifested by this Conference I may safely predict that the Association now formed will be maintained till the wrongs of which we complain are no more. I shall make no apology for applying the few remarks I shall make chiefly to the recent educational policy of the Government, though it was discussed yesterday, for on this our chief difference with them has arisen, and on their future action it depends whether they retain Nonconformist support or not. In respect to the Elementary Education Act two grave errors were committed by Ministers, first, in not making the Board schools absolutely unsectarian, and next in not leaving the denominational system alone. By permitting sectarianism in the Board schools on the one hand, and enlarging the grants to denominational schools and increasing their number, on the other, they have caused the present chaos, alienated their best friends, brought their motives into suspicion, and their statesmanship into contempt. It cannot be pleaded

that this injurious Act was passed in ignorance or inadvertence; for memorials and petitions, signed by several thousands of our ministers, were presented to the Government and the House of Commons, pointing out the injustice of various of its enactments, and the insuperable objection to them, but all in vain. By the aid of the Tories the Government forced their measure through Parliament, and we see the result; a huge system of concurrent endowment has been established, and, until the Act be amended, a national system of education rendered impossible. But bad as the Act is, its administration has made bad worse. In the hands of Mr. Forster, the evil genius of education, the whip has become a scorpion. And to justify this opinion, we have only to refer to the manifest partisanship of the Education Department, and especially to its conduct in regard to the payment of fees to denominational schools. The denominational system has been described by Mr. Lowe as a great and gross mistake. We agree with him; but why, then, we may fairly ask, did the Ministry of which he is a member, strengthen and extend it? Why increase the grants to denominational schools? Why create several thousand new ones? Why administer the Act in the interests of denominationalism? History might have told Mr. Lowe that the Government which perpetuates instead of correcting "great and gross mistakes" is self-doomed to destruction. Let us now view the conduct of the Government on Elementary Education by the light of their treatment of the endowed schools. The Act for the reform of these institutions gives the commissioners under it the power to frame schemes for their management, and to appoint governors, with whom would rest generally the control of the religious as well as the secular instruction imparted. Having such large powers, it was important in the highest degree that these commissioners should be impartially chosen. Now there were two obvious ways of making a fair choice. First, by a selection from the various theological parties into which we are divided; or, secondly from classes having no denominational bias. Neither plan was adopted, and three Churchmen were nominated in the face of a remonstrance from Mr. Miall and Mr. Richards, which, of course, was disregarded. The result was, as might be expected, a crop of schemes in which the Tory governors are as to

the Liberals three or four to one, the Churchmen as to Nonconformists four or five to one, and the Church as to the Nonconformist clergy as ten to one. So, as far as these schemes extend, the control of the secondary education of the country is given to the Tories, and another link is added to the almost interminable chain of sectarian supremacy which tortures and degrades Nonconformity. Some serious considerations here present themselves to the Liberal party, of which it is our pride to be members. We all know the difficulty it has in fighting its battle in the counties and small boroughs, where the landlord and clerical influence is so powerful. By the creation of new denominational schools, and by the Tory schemes of the Endowed Schools Commissioners, that influence will be enormously increased, and the Liberal difficulties correspondingly aggravated. For this the Ministry are responsible, and if their policy be maintained they will have to stand at the bar of public opinion charged with having betrayed their trust and played into the hands of the Tories. It is useless to deny that an impression is gaining ground that the national interests are being subordinated to the ecclesiastical proclivities of some members of the Government. But whatever be the conduct of the Liberals toward the Cabinet, the course of Nonconformists is clear. Henceforth no Ministry will have their support that does not apply the principles of religious equality to every measure that comes before Parliament, affecting the interests of the various denominations, and permit the appointments affecting them to be shared in common by Churchmen and Nonconformists. By their conduct in these and such cases they will stand or fall, and our policy toward them will be determined by their policy towards us. We will make our meaning plain. We shall ask, in respect to elementary education, that no sectarian teaching be allowed in the Board schools. We propose that the literary and moral be separated from religious instruction, the former being given by the State, the latter by religious persons at their own cost. We shall ask for the repeal of the 25th clause, and also for the withdrawal of all grants to denominational schools. In respect to the endowed schools we shall ask for an addition of Nonconformist commissioners to those of the Established Church; for a revision, in the interest of religious equality, of the schemes already issued, and

for an amended Act prohibiting all sectarian teaching in the schools. In regard to the universities we shall ask, not only that clerical fellowships, but that all other offices be thrown open; and in regard to marriages and burials, we shall ask that Nonconformists be placed in precisely the same position as Churchmen. In fine, we ask to be one with our Episcopal fellow-countrymen, to stand erect by their side, to share with them the responsibilities and duties, the rights and privileges of citizenship, to labour with them for the common good, and to live with them in fraternal intercourse—a patriotic and Christian demand which will soon be conceded, in spite of the interested opposition of statesmen or clergy.

Mr. H. RICHARD, M.P., read a paper on—

THE POLITICAL RELATIONS OF THE NONCONFORMISTS TO THE LIBERAL PARTY.

There seems some ambiguity in speaking of the relations of the Nonconformists to the Liberal party, seeing that the Nonconformists themselves, to a large extent, constitute the Liberal party in this country. But by the "Liberal party" probably it was intended we should understand the leaders of that party in Parliament, whether in or out of office; and it is in that sense that I shall use the expression in this paper. There is an impression prevalent in many quarters, both inside and outside our own ranks, that the Nonconformists are so largely indebted to the Liberal party, in the sense I have defined, that hardly any amount of self-denial or self-sacrifice can be too great to testify their gratitude for those services. (Laughter.) On the other hand, there are those who maintain that the Nonconformists have clung so firmly and faithfully to the changing fortunes of the Liberal party through evil report and good report, and have worked so strenuously for its principles and objects, that their claims have never been so fully recognised as they ought to have been, but that there has been, and that there still is, a disposition to treat them habitually with neglect, if not with something like disdain. In order, therefore, to solve this question, it will be necessary to take a brief retrospect of the past, that by a careful collation of facts, and as impartial an exercise of our judgment on those facts

as we can command, we may try to ascertain on which side the balance of obligation lies. How long may what is called the Liberal party be said to have existed in England? Well, from the time of the Revolution of 1688 certainly the distinction of Whig and Tory has prevailed, a distinction supposed—and rightly supposed—to represent a difference of principle as well as of name. And from that time the Nonconformists have allied themselves politically with the Whigs, and never, so far as I know, have they been charged with unfaithfulness to that alliance. (Hear, hear.) Nor can we deny—nay, we gladly and gratefully acknowledge—that there are some illustrious names connected with the Whig party whom we must ever hold in gratitude and veneration for their defence of the principles of religious liberty, and to some extent for their practical assertion and advocacy of the civil and political rights of Dissenters. Such are the names of Lord Somers, Bishop Burnet, Charles James Fox, Lord Holland, and Lord John Russell. (Applause.) But I think it clear, from a survey of the past, that the Liberal party have been willing to serve the Nonconformists only when they could do so with perfect safety to their own interests, and that whenever those interests have been in jeopardy the claims of the Dissenters have been postponed or set aside without much scruple or compunction. When William III. ascended the throne the Nonconformists were practically outlaws in their own country. By a series of acts as despotic and infamous as ever dishonoured the statute-book of any nation professing to be free—the Act of Uniformity, the Corporation Act, the Conventicle Act, the Five Mile Act, and the Test Act—they had been deprived of nearly all their rights as citizens on account of their religion, and were exposed to such disabilities, penalties, and persecutions as might well have crushed them, but for the operation of that principle so well expressed by the poet Wordsworth—

> "He who would force the soul tilts with a straw
> Against a champion cased in adamant."

It was acknowledged on all hands that the conduct of the Nonconformists during the reign of James II. when they sacrificed their own rights to the weal of the nation, and the prompt, cordial, and unanimous support which they gave to the Prince of Orange

at a time when nearly the whole body of the clergy held aloof from him or repudiated his claims, had contributed largely to that happy settlement which laid the foundation of our national liberties, and entitled them to the warm gratitude of all the friends of constitutional freedom. The King himself was conscious of this, and when he met the two Houses of the Legislature in 1689 he earnestly recommended that the Tests and Corporation Acts should be abolished, and bills embodying these and other provisions were prepared and introduced. At that time the great Whig families were completely in the political ascendant; and yet, says the historian of the Free Churches, "the clause for abolishing the sacramental test was thrown out in the Lords by the votes of Whigs, and the votes of Whigs decided the fate of the Corporation Bill in the Commons," so that the disabilities which they were meant to remove remained saddled on the shoulders of the Dissenters for 140 years longer. This was done, not because the Whig leaders doubted the justice of the Nonconformists' claims, but because it was thought more expedient to conciliate the disaffection of the Jacobite clergy than to reward the tried loyalty of the Dissenters. (Applause.) All that the Nonconformists got was a Toleration Act—(laughter)—the very name of which was an insult—(hear, hear)—which gave them little more than a bare permission to exist—(hear, hear)—but to exist still proscribed, disqualified, fettered, and branded with many humiliating marks of civil and political inferiority. During the Tory reaction in the reign of Queen Anne there were two of what was called "Occasional Conformity" Bills introduced into Parliament, conceived in the bitterest spirit of hostility to the Nonconformists, and intended to withdraw from them some of the few and partial concessions made by the Toleration Act. The first of these, brought forward in 1702, would have absolutely precluded Dissenters from being members of any corporation. But the Whigs, we are told, in many parts of the country where the Corporations returned members to Parliament, were to a great extent dependent for their election on the Dissenting members of those Corporations. They, therefore, fought against the Bill with stubborn tenacity, and defeated it. But in 1711 another Occasional Conformity Bill was introduced. It provided that no person who did not conform to the Church should

be capable of holding any civil or military office; that if, after his admission to such an office, any person should be found in a conventicle or any religious meeting consisting of more than ten persons, other than one conducted according to the rites and ceremonies of the Established Church, he should forfeit the sum of forty pounds, and be disabled for the future from holding any office. This naturally excited the greatest alarm among the Nonconformists, who repaired to those with whom they had been accustomed to act politically, and entreated them to oppose the Bill. But not a voice was lifted up by their Whig allies against this nefarious measure, and it passed through the House of Commons in three days, without a protest or a division. (Shame.) And why? Because it was necessary to sacrifice the Dissenters to party necessities. The Whigs could not regain power without the aid of the Earl of Nottingham, and he would not join them unless they consented to pass the Occasional Conformity Bill. The bargain therefore was struck, and in spite of the earnest entreaties and remonstrances of the Nonconformists, they were treated as if beneath contempt, the Whigs ignoring their services, and the Tories exulting in their disgrace. But without entering further into details, we may say that, in the language of Lord Macaulay, "the Whig party had during seventy years an almost uninterrupted possession of power." It was a critical time in the history of the nation, for it was the time when the new dynasty was struggling for existence and stability. The whole body of Dissenters rallied round the House of Hanover as with the heart of one man. During the Church and Stuart rebellion of 1715 they were acknowledged to have rendered services of inestimable value to the Government. Charles James Fox, referring to the part they took then and in 1745, says: "During those rebellious periods the Dissenters had acted with the spirit and fidelity of British subjects zealous and vigilant in defence of the constitution; at both these periods they stood forward the champions of British liberty, and obtained an eminent share in repelling the foe of the House of Hanover. Their exertions then were so magnanimous that I have no scruple to assert that to their endeavours we owed the preservation of Church and State." And yet during these many years, when the Whigs were in power and the Nonconformists were

of such service to the State, scarcely anything was attempted, and still less was done, to vindicate their rights or to redress their wrongs. During twenty of these years, Sir Robert Walpole, who has been called "the glory of the Whigs," was in power. Again and again did the leaders of Dissent apply to him to relieve them of their disabilities, and again and again were they put off with insincere promises, or bluntly and rudely repelled. At the general Election in 1734, when a determined effort was made to return a House which would expel him from office, the whole strength of the Dissenters was exerted, and successfully exerted, to keep him in power. But when, shortly after, a deputation from the Dissenters waited upon him to remind him of the promises he had often given to help in relieving them from the tests which oppressed them so grievously, he replied that the time was not yet arrived. Dr. Chandler, who headed the deputation, said, "You have so repeatedly returned this answer that I trust you will give me leave to ask when the time will come?" "If you require a specific answer," said Walpole, "I will give it you in a word—never." Indeed, his conduct cannot be better characterised than in the words of Lord Macaulay, himself by no means a passionate friend of Dissenters. The language he uses is very significant, and seems to me to have an application to other times than the reign of the Georges, and to other ministries than that of Sir Robert Walpole. "He had been brought up," says Lord Macaulay, "in the school of toleration, at the feet of Somers and of Burnet. He disliked the shameful laws against Dissenters. But he never could be induced to bring forward a proposition for repealing them. The sufferers represented to him the injustice with which they were treated, boasted of their firm attachment to the House of Brunswick and to the Whig party, and reminded him of his own repeated declarations of goodwill to their cause. He listened, assented, promised, and did nothing. At length the question was brought forward by others, and the minister, after a hesitating and evasive speech, voted against it. . . If the Dissenters had been turbulent he would probably have relieved them; but while he apprehended no danger from them he would not run the slightest risk for their sakes." (Applause.) So discouraged had the Dissenters been by their abortive

efforts to obtain something like justice during the long reign of the Liberal party, that for many years afterwards they seemed to have made no attempt to bring their claims again before the country or Parliament. But in the year 1787 the Committee of Deputies determined once more to appeal to the Legislature for the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts. The question was taken up by Mr. Beaufoy, a name never to be mentioned by us without respect and gratitude. Perhaps we have a little too much forgotten in these days what the nature and operation of those laws were from which our loyal forefathers so long and so vainly struggled for deliverance. They cannot be exhibited in a more striking form than by one short quotation from the speech of Mr. Beaufoy, who led the cause of the Dissenters in the House of Commons. He cites the case of John Howard as an illustration of the working of those laws. "He," said the speaker, "upon whom every kingdom in Europe, England excepted, would gladly confer at least the common privileges of a citizen, and whom the proudest nation might be happy to call her own; he, of whom a right honourable member of this House (Mr. Burke) has said, 'he has visited all Europe, not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces or the stateliness of temples, not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to take a scale of the curiosity of modern art, not to collect medals nor to collate manuscripts; but to dive into the depths of dungeons, to plunge into the infection of hospitals, to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten and attend the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of men in all countries,'—he, even he, is denied in England the common rights of a subject; he is incapable of legal admission into any office; and the consequence is that, his zeal for his country having led him a few years since to brave the penalties of the law, and to serve her in a troublesome and expensive civil employment without the sacramental qualification which his religious persuasion would not permit him to take, the penalties of the Test Act are still hanging over him, and I fear that even now, on his return to his native country amid the plaudits of an admiring world, it is in the power of any desperate informer who is willing to take that road

to wealth and damnation—(loud applause)—which the Legislature has pointed out and recommended to his choice,—I fear it is in the power of every such informer to prosecute him to conviction, and to bring upon him those dreadful penalties which contribute to the punishment of an outlaw." Such were the laws, which, at the end of a century from the time of the Revolution, during by far the greater part of which the Liberal party had been in power, still lay like an incubus upon the social and political life of the Nonconformists. Then, indeed, came a period when the leaders of that party in Parliament acquitted themselves in such sort as to demand that they should be held by us in honourable and everlasting remembrance. Session after session did Mr. Fox especially, undeterred by repeated failures and growing unpopularity—for in that howling storm of ignorance and passion which rose after the first French Revolution, every man who lifted up his voice in favour of liberty was covered with obloquy—continue in strains of the noblest eloquence, and on the loftiest principles of religious equality, to denounce the iniquitous laws against Dissenters, and to demand their repeal. That effort was also unsuccessful; but in this instance certainly not from want of courage, earnestness, and devotion on the part of those who espoused the cause of the Nonconformists in Parliament. For 38 years after that not a voice was lifted up in Parliament in favour of dissenting claims. At length Lord John Russell—(cheers)—in 1828, at the request of a large body of Nonconformists, and backed by all the weight of public opinion which they could bring to bear on the Legislature, introduced another motion far the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which was carried. And thus, at last, did a large body of English citizens—who were acknowledged to be far more faithful to the Government and loyal to the Crown than many members of that Church whose members nevertheless enjoyed a monopoly of official patronage and power, and of all the honours and emoluments the State could confer—succeed, after 140 years of incessant struggle, not in attaining anything like civil and political equality, but in winning the bare privilege of being permitted to serve their country without renouncing their faith. And even then the Bill which was founded on Lord John Russell's motion was marred by an offen-

sive declaration, which it has been admitted was "not worth the paper on which it was written," but which nevertheless was maintained for nearly 40 years longer, as the friends of the Church of England declared, merely "as a bridle upon the consciences of her opponents." When the Reform Bill of 1831-2 was brought forward the whole body of the Dissenters not only approved and accepted its provisions, but in every part of the country threw themselves, among the foremost and most strenuous, into that conflict out of doors which enabled the Liberal Government to encounter the formidable combination of interest by which it was assailed and resisted, and to pass it into law. Nay, indeed, Lord Russell has since roundly declared that "the Dissenters carried the Reform Bill." No doubt, like other classes of the community, they expected to gain something by the great victory which they had contributed so much to achieve. But their expectations were not extravagant. Their main demand at that time was the abolition of Church-rates. But though Liberal Governments were in power by far the greater part of the time, they had to wait 34 years for that small modicum of justice. The first offer which the Reform Ministry made in response to their demands was to transfer the burden of repairing churches to the land tax, which, far from abolishing, would have rendered the imposition eternal. They did, indeed, afterwards make a fairer attempt for our relief by proposing that the charges provided for by Church-rates should be paid out of Church lands and pew rents. But finding on a second division that the majority which supported the measure had diminished, they were so dismayed that they not only withdrew their proposal, but ever afterwards positively declined to "touch the burden with one of their fingers." Not only so, but they steadfastly resisted all attempts made by the Dissenters, or on their behalf, to get rid of the impost. When Mr. Whittle Harvey moved a resolution for abolition the Whig leaders combined with the Tories to defeat him. When Mr. Duncombe, in 1839, moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the relief of Dissenters, the Whigs opposed and defeated him. When Sir John Trelawney, in 1849, moved a resolution to the same effect, the Liberal Ministry led the opposition to him, and procured his defeat, as

well as that of an amendment proposed by Mr. Page Wood, the present Lord Chancellor, to exempt Dissenters, alone from the payment of Church-rates. The Dissenters, therefore, had to pass through many long years of further conflict and agitation, some taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, others submitting to imprisonment, others to the burden of prolonged and costly law suits, and many to exciting local contests most abhorrent to their nature and habits, until, in the year 1868, the question was settled, not by a Liberal Government, but by Mr. Gladstone's personal exertions when out of office. All honour to him for the service. Among the grievances of which Dissenters had long complained was the absence of any legal registration for births and of the right to celebrate marriages in their own places of worship. It is only justice to Sir Robert Peel to state that during his short occupancy of office in 1835 among the measures which he announced his intention of introducing was one for the relief of Dissenters in this respect, by providing for the civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths. And it was after this announcement that the Liberal Government which succeeded him brought forward Bills for the same object, rather, however, on general grounds than immediately in the interests of Nonconformists. But in settling the details the wishes of the Nonconformists were fairly, if not fully, consulted. But our Liberal friends did this then at so little sacrifice or risk to themselves that the Bills passed both the Commons and the Lords without a division. Nevertheless, the acknowledgments of the Dissenters were then, and have been ever since, expressed with a constancy and fervour which proves that, far from being open to the charge of ingratitude, one of their foibles is a disposition to be exuberantly thankful for very small mercies. Whatever else the Dissenters have gained, they have gained pretty much for themselves. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Hadfield's Qualification for Offices Bill, which he carried seven times through the House of Commons to be as often rejected by the Lords, owed its success at last to his own indomitable perseverance and pluck—(applause)—far more than to the favour of any Government; and when at length it was passed, it was his and not a Government measure that was passed. So in regard to the various Burials Bills; they have always been

in the hands of private members, though receiving a somewhat lukewarm support from Liberal Governments, that kind of support which shows very little anxiety for their success and very little regret for their defeat. The same thing may be said until quite lately of our successive efforts for the Abolition of the University Tests. In 1854 the admission of Dissenters to Oxford was secured by an amendment moved by Mr. Heywood—(loud cheers)—and carried against the opposition of the Liberal Government. In like manner the further measures brought in by Mr. Dodson, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Bouverie, and Sir John Coleridge were treated by the Governments only as open questions until 1870, when the question was taken in hand by Mr. Gladstone—for which we thank him with all our hearts—and in 1871 settled after a fashion and for a time. (Applause.) I might refer to the various experiments in educational legislation made or countenanced by the leaders of the Liberal party, to Mr. Brougham's Bill in 1820, to Sir James Graham's in 1843, which, though it was introduced by a Conservative Government, received the full sanction and support of all the Liberal leaders, so that we had to fight and defeat that measure not only without their help, but in the teeth of their open and avowed hostility; to the Minutes of Council of 1847, to Lord J. Russell's Bill of 1853, to Mr. Forster's Bill of 1870, to show how little the Liberal party understand the principles, acknowledge the rights, or consult the wishes of the Nonconformists. But there is another side of the question. I have spoken of an alliance between the Nonconformists and the leaders of the Liberal party. I have endeavoured to show how our Parliamentary allies have acted in reference to us. But an alliance of course implies reciprocal obligations. And how have the Nonconformists acted their part? Have we ever failed the Liberal party in any emergency whatever? (Hear, hear.) In every conflict in which that party has been engaged has not our wing of the Liberal army been the first to advance and the last to retreat on the field of battle? (Applause.) In hundreds of constituencies all over the country have not the Nonconformists borne the heat and burden of the day in the maintenance and the advancement of Liberal principles? If at this moment you were to ask the great majority of the Liberal members in the House of

Commons who are the men in their respective constituencies who worked for them most devotedly in the past, and on whom they can count most confidently for the future, I am persuaded they would say the Nonconformists. (Hear, hear.) And while thus helping forward the general cause of progress, have we been impatient, or unreasonably exacting, in pressing our own claims? So far otherwise, that it may be truly said of us that "sufferance is the badge of all our tribe." (Laughter.) Have we not again and again willingly held in abeyance objects that were dear to us rather than interfere with some great philanthropic or national agitation? Without for the time giving a thought to our own still unredressed wrongs, did we not with all our heart and soul and strength join Buxton and Sturge in demanding the emancipation of the slave, and Cobden and Bright in fighting the battle of free trade? (Cheers.) Again and again has Mr. Cobden remarked to me, "I am bound to say that in our long struggle for free trade we found your people everywhere our most earnest and trustworthy friends." (Cheers.) Yea, have we not often when there was no great public question to the fore, and for the mere political convenience of the party, to avoid embarrassing the Minister, or humour the mere caprice or ill-temper of those in power, consented to have our just rights sacrificed or indefinitely postponed? Have we in the various constituencies, even when we were largely in the majority, been in the habit of imperilling the success of the Liberal party by bringing forward men of our own, though we had men of our own whom we knew were admirably qualified to represent our principles and aims in Parliament? (Hear, hear.) On the contrary, rather than divide the Liberal party, have we not often accepted most weak-kneed, rickety, feeble-minded brethren in the political faith—(laughter and applause)—and in strict obedience to the Apostolic injunction received these persons weak in the faith—(laughter)—not even to doubtful disputations—(cheers)—but on the contrary have done all we could by assiduous nursing—(laughter)—and the gentlest shampooing to strengthen the weak hands and to confirm the feeble knees? (Renewed laughter and loud cheers.) Nay, have we not sometimes had to stand as political sponsors for Whig catechumens who could scarcely be brought by any amount of schooling and prompting to utter with stammering lips the simplest

and most elementary responses in their Liberal catechism? (Applause.) But there is another aspect of the question on which I think it is time that we should venture to say a word. When an election takes place in this country, like the last for instance, intended to carry into power men holding Liberal principles and pledged to a Liberal policy, I think it will be admitted that no men work harder, no men sacrifice more cheerfully their time, their labour, their business pursuits for a time, and their money than the Nonconformists. (Hear, hear.) And whenever there is political suffering for conscience' sake, it generally falls upon them. After the last election there were, in Wales alone—(loud applause)—scores of men—honest, industrious, religious men—who were evicted from their holdings, turned houseless and homeless upon the world, on account of their courageous fidelity to their political convictions. (Hear, hear.) Every one of these sufferers, without an exception, was a Dissenter. (Applause.) And so it is generally that our allies lavish the labour and sacrifice upon us with a liberal hand. But when the time comes for the distribution of official rewards, what share of the spoil falls to our lot? (Hear, hear.) It would be curious if a return could be obtained of the religious profession of office holders in this country—(hear, hear)—to see to what an extent our excellent friends of the Church of England have contrived to occupy every "jutty, frieze, buttress, and coign of vantage" in the great palace of patronage. (Applause.) While for us the rule seems to be as if on the door of every Government office, especially that of the Education Departments, this label were affixed, "No Nonconformists need apply." (Laughter.) Happily the Dissenters of this country have never been place-hunters or tuft-hunters—(hear, hear)—never haunters of Ministerial ante-chambers; never of the class of political Micawbers, waiting on the official providence for something to turn up. (Laughter.) But I am not at all sure that we have not carried our indifference on this point to a faulty excess—(hear, hear)—and whether we should not for the future, not to gratify our ambition, but to protect our interests—(hear, hear)—claim a fairer share of official position and influence. For we have begun to discover that we are grievously at a disadvantage, not merely as regards legislative action, but also as regards departmental administration. (Hear, hear.)

We find in respect to matters in which we are vitally concerned, the whole power in the hands of men, as permanent officials, whose principles and sympathies are wholly adverse to us, and who use that power, often, no doubt, almost unconsciously, but sometimes also obviously and unscrupulously, to baulk our wishes and to injure our interests. (Applause.) There is one further question arising out of the relations of the Nonconformists to the Liberal party on which probably I shall be expected to say a word. It cannot be denied that of late those relations have been somewhat rudely disturbed, and that a deep sense of wrong, a deep feeling of disappointment, not to say disaffection, pervades the whole Nonconformist camp. What, in these circumstances, is the course we ought to pursue. Well, it is not for one individual to prescribe, or even to suggest, a course for so numerous and powerful a body as are the Dissenters of England and Wales. I can only express, in the simplest and briefest form, my own views, and leave you to decide how far they reflect or interpret yours. It seems to me then that we ought to do nothing—and so strong is the confidence I have in the good sense, the moderation, the self-control of my brother Nonconformists, that I venture to say we shall do nothing—out of passion, resentment, or spite. (Hear, hear.) We will join no party to defeat or embarrass the Government—merely to wreak our wrath upon them for what we may think, and do think, to have been unfair and ungenerous treatment of ourselves. Our quarrel with those in power, so far as there is a quarrel, is one purely of principle. (Hear, hear.) We have no disappointed ambition to avenge, no hungering after the official loaves and fishes to gratify, that we should be tempted into any factious opposition to the Government. We have no inclination and no intention, if we can possibly avoid it, to withdraw our confidence and support from Mr. Gladstone. (Applause.) Our feelings towards him have had, and still have, a deeper element in them than those of ordinary political allegiance. (Hear, hear.) He is the Minister of our predilection. We are proud of what the greatest of his opponents has called "his transcendent abilities." We admire the gallant spirit in which he grappled with, and the consummate energy and eloquence with which he mastered and solved those problems connected with the government of Ireland

before which so many other statesmen had retired baffled and dismayed. We honour and we feel we can sympathise with his earnest, religious nature. We feel grateful to him for the honest pains we believe he has on more than one occasion taken to understand our views and to consult our wishes. We have observed with deep interest the manner in which he has gradually shaken himself free from the Tory cerements, which in early days had been wound around his spirit, and struggled into clearer and broader conceptions of truth and duty. We had hoped, and still hope, that it is reserved for him to achieve further triumphs in the cause of justice, and freedom, and Liberal progress. (Applause.) But if it comes to be a question between allegiance to a party and loyalty to principle, we cannot hesitate. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) I think I have shown that there are abundant proofs along the whole line of our history that we have not been unreasonable in our expectations or importunate in our demands; and we are still prepared to exercise large forbearance towards our ancient Liberal allies, of whom we may say that—

> "In many an arduous and well-foughten field
> We held together in our chivalry,"

But we believe there are certain great principles—principles which go down to the very foundation of all civil, religious, and intellectual freedom—(hear, hear)—for the maintenance and defence of which we are set, and for the maintenance and defence of which we mean to stand. (Cheers.) And we do this, not as Nonconformists, but as Englishmen—(hear, hear)—believing, as we do from the bottom of our hearts, that the principles we advocate are those which will tend most hereafter, as it is acknowledged they have tended most heretofore, to establish the liberties of our country upon sure and firm foundations. We are willing to exercise patience, to make reasonable concessions; but to adopt a course which will involve the sacrifice, or the surrender, or the serious compromise of these vital principles, for the sake of any man or of any party, is what we cannot, what we ought not, what we must not, what we dare not, and, by God's help, what we will not do. (Loud and prolonged cheers).

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN read the following paper on

THE POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF NONCONFORMISTS.

A few months ago the *Spectator* newspaper commenced an article in these words :—"No doubt it is new to the Dissenters to feel the flush of dictatorial arrogance. Though they have long been influential, they have hitherto been influential rather as humble friends, who have earned consideration by valuable services, are influential; and, in return, they have rarely expected more than the redress of one or two flagrant injustices—the legalisation of marriages by their ministers—the abolition of Church-rates—the admission of Dissenters to the Universities—the repeal of the many privileges accorded in the Statute Book to clergymen of the Church of England. If any one or two of these reforms was taken up heartily by the Liberal Ministry of the day, the Dissenters have, till lately, been grateful, and gave that Ministry its hearty support at the poll." It is not as the opinion of a paper which, as Mr. John Bright once said, "is conducted with considerably ability, although it is somewhat conceited in its criticisms upon us," that the article from which I have quoted asserts its importance; it is because it fairly represents the view which is entertained of Nonconformist policy by that spurious Liberalism which asserts itself to be the offspring of culture and light, and which can see in strong feeling and conscientious principle only the evidence of sectarian bigotry and impracticable selfishness. Step by step for 200 years, by patience in suffering, by courage in resistance, by firm determination and untiring persistence, Dissenters have successively wrested from the dominant sect their right to exist, then to hold their opinions, and finally to propagate them. And at intervals during this hard-fought struggle, "superior persons" have intervened, like the editor of the *Spectator*, to point out that sufficient condescension has been shown, and to enjoin a humble demeanour and a grateful moderation, under threats of a withdrawal of their countenance and support. Thus, in his day, the celebrated Dean Swift was good enough to point out to Nonconformists that "if their religion was different from that of their country, and the Government thought fit to tolerate it, they ought to be fully satisfied, and give no offence, by writing or discourse, to the worship established, as the Dissenting preachers are apt to do."

(Laughter.) It is pretty certain that the Dean would have objected to our Conference as much as the *Spectator* itself, but I do not think we need pay more attention to the advice of our candid critic than our ancestors did to theirs. My subject is the political organisation of Nonconformists. But the title assumes some things that I have to prove. It is hardly worth while to put on our armour unless we have objects worth fighting for. We cannot organise with any advantage unless we have obtained a clear conception of the ends of our organisation. And these ends must be of great and momentous importance—they must be connected with national as well as sectional interests, or we shall not be justified in using the power which we undoubtedly possess. There are some Nonconformists of eminence, gentlemen whom the *Spectator* loves to quote, and whom it designates as "pillars of Dissent," who profess themselves already almost entirely satisfied, and unable to see that we have much left to struggle for. We have secured at last, and after many a hard fought battle, toleration for our conscientious convictions, and even liberty to express them; but these concessions are still accompanied with the reservation of exclusive privileges and special patronage for the holders of the opinions favoured by the State. To some of us it appears that this is not the destined conclusion of our labours. Toleration itself has an ugly sound to those who are unconscious of committing any wrong, or manifesting any inherent inferiority which requires the exercise of this magnanimous abstention from persecution, while, at the same time, we feel that, as far as our chances of social and educational success are concerned, there is not much to choose between the policy which proscribed our competition and the system which keeps all the stimulants to exertion, and reserves all the prizes for proficiency, for our opponents in the race.

We urge that we are still entitled to demand that the State should no longer single out any faith for its especial care and patronage. Persecution, as Burke said, is only one form of injustice, and injustice driven from persecution must not be allowed to find a refuge in corruption. The fact that we have gained much, of which we are reminded by the *Spectator*, is no sufficient reason for not demanding more. The payment, under compulsion, of half our due, is no bar in law or equity to our attempts to recover the

whole of the inheritance which has been wrongfully kept from us. Again and again the support of the Dissenters has carried into power a Liberal Ministry or saved it from defeat, and again and again the claims of these "humble friends" have been met by the reply which is made by the wolf in the fable, to the crow which had extracted the bone in its throat, "See the unreasonableness of these creatures! Have I not suffered thee safely to draw thy neck out of my jaws, and hast thou the conscience to ask for a further reward?" (Laughter.) It must be borne in mind that in religious, as in all other questions, we cannot hope to remain stationary. If we do not progress, there is reason enough to fear that we may lose something of that which we have so hardly won. That this is no chimerical apprehension is proved by recent legislation. The action of the Public Schools Commission has already, in the case of Harrow School, created a new disability, and Nonconformists are, for the first time, legally excluded from its governing body. The operations of the Endowed Schools Commissioners have been more systematically directed to secure the supremacy of Church control in our middle-class schools, and not only was the attempt made, now happily defeated, to create at least one clergyman an *ex officio* member of nearly every governing body, but the constitution of these has been so skilfully devised, that a large majority of their members will always be Churchmen and Conservatives. At the same time, the Elementary Education Act, which was to inaugurate a really national system, has been strained in every possible way to further the interests of the denominations, and especially to strengthen the practical monopoly of the Church of England in this country, and to pave the way for the surrender to the priests of the Church of Rome of the entire control of the education of the young in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) The obnoxious provisions of these Acts constitute the latest, if not the greatest, grievance under which Dissenters suffer. It is worth while, therefore, to consider how far their results are accidental, and how far they express a deliberate preference for the principle of ecclesiastical supremacy on the part of a Liberal Government, enjoying its position mainly owing to our exertions. When the Endowed Schools Commission was appointed, it was generally admitted that the condition of these great foundations

was anomalous and unsatisfactory. They were extravagantly and wastefully conducted; they were grossly inefficient for their main object. In many cases they had been jobbed for the benefit of particular churches or private individuals, and, very generally, the benefits of what were intended to be national institutions were exclusively confined to the members of the dominant sect. The Commissioners appointed to rearrange these charities, and to secure a national application of national funds, were, by a singular coincidence, all members of the religious body which had, to so large an extent, monopolised these resources, and thereby created a necessity for reform. The injustice which Dissenters had suffered was one of the main grounds for the action taken. Their interests in the decision were evident; yet, in the first instance, the whole power of criticism, of suggestion, of initiation, was placed in the hands of Churchmen, and the redress of a crying grievance was left to the representatives of those who had committed the wrong. It is scarcely surprising that a Commission so constituted should deal tenderly with vested interests; or that, in their hands, the schemes of reorganisation should almost spontaneously assume a form which in every case secures for the Church of England the practical control and management of these important institutions. We are not blind to the singular ability displayed by the Endowed Schools Commissioners, and it is not necessary to impute to them any conscious bias or intentional injustice; but their proceedings emphatically point to the necessity of a better representation of Nonconformist interests and principles in legislation, in which these are deeply concerned. The evidence in the case of the Elementary Education Act is even more strongly in favour of the same conclusion, and irresistibly confirms the growing distrust in the ecclesiastical policy of our Liberal statesmen. The cumulative vote, with its resultant advantages to the most compact and best organised of the sects—the six months' delay, and the impetus given to the erection of Church schools—the enormously increased grants, with no corresponding increase of efficiency—the 25th clause,—all these can hardly be assumed to be fortuitous advantages or undesigned coincidences of Mr. Forster's compromises. (Hear, hear.) Had they been so, we might fairly have expected that, as their practical operations became manifest, our Liberal

leaders would have acknowledged their mistake, and promised us redress and amendment. Hitherto we have had no indication of repentance. On the contrary, we are informed that it is the Dissenters alone who impede the beneficial operations of this admirable measure. We are adjured to give further trial to an act which, in twelve months, has done more active injury to the principles of religious equality and the cause of national education than could have resulted from twenty years of inglorious activity. (Applause.) We are taunted with disloyalty to a compromise made between Mr. Forster and the Tories (laughter), to which we were no parties, and we are accused of factious discontent and intolerance because we will not tamely surrender the hopes which have hitherto stimulated and guided our policy. In presence of the results accomplished by the Education Department in their manipulation of Mr. Forster's Act, it would be simply suicidal for Nonconformists to stand idly by, while all that they hold dear in educational policy is sacrificed and overthrown. The number of new Church Schools built in two years before the passing of the Act was less than 200 per annum. In the six months' grace allowed by Mr. Forster, grants were asked for 2,852 Church schools, and these applications are being met in the most generous and lavish spirit. Districts, largely inhabited by Nonconformists, have been magnificently assisted by State funds to provide themselves with a monopoly of church school accommodation—(hear, hear)—and the schools so established will be so munificently endowed with annual subsidies that, with the most ordinary economy, they will be maintained without any contributions from the denomination in whose interests they have been erected. I could quote case after case of private schools whose accounts show a large profit, and whose working is entirely independent of private subscriptions. And thus in every borough, in every parish in this kingdom, under the fostering care of a Liberal Government, there are rising up institutions, erected in part by national grants, supported by national funds, collected both from the taxes and the rates levied on the whole community—institutions which parliamentary irony facetiously describes as National Schools, but which are, to all intents and purposes, bulwarks of the Anglican Church, the centres and strength of her political

power, committee-rooms at elections, and the main lever for that Conservative reaction, so long predicted, and now hastened and encouraged by this disastrous bill. (Cheers.) Is it wonderful that the Nonconformists have revolted? Was it statesmanlike to expect their passive acquiescence in a policy which reverses and stultifies the work they have magnified for so many generations? There is one member of the Government, at all events, who should not fall into this error. In 1851, the present Prime Minister said, in words which we may all of us endorse, "We cannot change the profound and restless tendencies of the age towards religious liberty. . . . To endeavour to turn them backwards is the sport of children, done by the hands of men, and every effort you may make in that direction will recoil upon you in disaster and disgrace." (Applause.) We demand, then, not humbly, nor with bated breath, that no backward steps shall be taken in the ecclesiastical policy of the Liberal party, that the movement in that direction shall be at once retraced, the retreat stopped, and preparations made for a new advance. The special reforms which I submit we must now claim in the name of religious equality, are—first, the absolute control by the representatives of the ratepayers of all national funds applied to purposes of secular education, and the withdrawal of all grants made to the denominations for this purpose. (Hear, hear.) This involves the relegation to religious bodies of the religious teaching of the children at school, for which purpose each sect will have its own buildings, at times set apart for the purpose, while the Board schools may be similarly employed, provided no privilege be given to one denomination over another. This is the only possible solution at present of the religious difficulty. Thanks to Mr. Forster, there are now thousands of parishes, amply provided with school accommodation, entirely in the hands of the most powerful and richly endowed of the sects. In these districts national education is impossible, unless the State, through its representatives, elected by the ratepayers, assumes entire control of the schools during the time devoted to secular teaching. To claim this is only to insist on the practical operation of the principle laid down in Mr. Gladstone's Greenwich speech, and to demand "the severance between the application of State funds and controverted matters of religion."

Secondly, and of the same character, is our requirement with respect to Normal Schools. Of 34 of these training colleges, 29 are conducted by the Church of England and the Roman Catholics, and only three are professedly unsectarian, and managed by the British and Foreign School Society. These sectarian schools are mainly supported by public money, and the enormous grants which they receive from the common purse are thus devoted to support institutions whose chief effort is directed to the preparation of sectarian teachers, unfitted on that very account to promote a national unsectarian system. Thirdly, the question of university reform is still unsettled. We shall be told that the act passed last session was a compromise which we have no right to disturb; but the sooner we let it be clearly understood that Nonconformists will accept no compromises of their cherished principles, and receive no instalments as complete satisfaction of their undoubted rights, the better it will be for us, and for the Government which requires our support. (Applause.)

Lastly, we claim, as we think not prematurely, but in the ripeness of time, the crowning of the edifice—the removal of that injustice which has created and fomented all the rest—the abolition of those ecclesiastical privileges which have divided the nation into two camps on almost every political and social question, and which have hindered its development and stunted and repressed its free religious and intellectual life. It is full time that we struck at the root of the tree which has borne evil fruit too long—(cheers)—and which has produced the intolerance of thought and action which has so often hindered practical legislation, and blocked the way to social and religious progress. The disestablishment of the Irish Church is an absurd anomaly, unless it is followed by the disestablishment of the Church of England and Wales. (Renewed cheers.) A wrong and injustice done by a minority to a majority of the people does not become just and right when practised by a majority on a minority. The injury is as great in principle even if it can be shown to be less in degree. The pay and patronage of the State blesses neither the giver nor the receiver of the bribe. A Church divided against itself, and united only in the determination to maintain its vested interests, and in opposition to those who should be hailed as fellow-workers in a

common cause—a Church clinging tenaciously to the connection which saps its independence and confines its usefulness—these are the consequences of a system which has outlived its reason for existence, and which is defended by those who have long since ceased to believe in the theories which have led to its creation.

What we want, then, is religious equality—social, political, and economical. It remains to be shown why these reforms are needed. Incidentally I have already pointed out the injustice which the present state of things inflicts upon Dissenters. But this is not enough; for, unlike Lord Denbigh, *we* are Nonconformists if you please, but first of all Englishmen; and unless the interests at stake are higher and more important than the success of a party or the prosperity of a sect, we shall not wish, we shall not dare to enforce them on our representatives and on the Government. It is not, then, merely as an act of justice to a large proportion of the community that we ask and demand the abolition of the invidious distinctions and preferences which still exist—although even on this score we may urge our position as one of national importance, since it is not to the interest of the nation that any section of it should appeal in vain for justice—but we base our chief claim to be heard on the fact, that the nation directly suffers from the adherence in practice to doctrines which it has now condemned in theory. Thus all the tests which have been devised—those which remain as well as those which have been reluctantly abandoned—have chiefly tended to deprive the nation of the advantages which it might derive from the unshackled admission of all its citizens to office and to education. In the one case the choice of the people has been limited; in the other, talents which should have belonged to the nation have remained uncultivated; and in both instances alike the loss of individuals has turned to the detriment of the public service. The history of this country bears one unbroken testimony to the evils caused by the attempt to maintain any kind of priestly supremacy within its borders. It is true now as it was nearly two centuries ago, that—

> "Of all the plagues with which mankind is cursed
> Ecclesiastical tyranny is the worst."

And the laity of the Church of England, as well as that great body of the people which owns no allegiance to any sect or denomina-

tion, are as much interested as we are in our efforts to remove the last traces of priestly domination. The man who, of all others now living, has best earned the title of the "Tribune of the People," and whose life-long efforts for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes have always met with the most uncompromising opposition from their State-appointed religious teachers—John Bright—(loud cheers)—speaking in April, 1847, said:—"Nothing tends more to impede the progress of liberty, nothing is more fatal to independence of spirit in the public, than to add to the powers of the priesthood in the matters of education. If you give them such increased powers by legislative enactment, you do more than you could effect by any other means to enslave and degrade a people subject to their influence." And now, having stated our claims as clearly as the limits of this paper will allow, and having indicated briefly the nature of the interests involved, it remains only to consider, in conclusion, the kind of action by which we may best and most properly secure our objects. Our final decision upon this point will be determined by our estimate of the vitality and importance of the principles at stake. If our grievances are speculative and sentimental merely, as our adversaries would have us believe, it is not probable that we shall have heart enough to carry the contest to a successful, or, at any rate, to a speedy conclusion. We have arrayed against us the most complete organisation, the most intense feeling. We attack interests of the most powerful kind, strengthened by all the Conservative traditions of the country, backed by all the influence that wealth and power and respectability can bring to bear. We have no right to expect that the walls will fall when we blow our trumpets—we may feel sure that the place will be defended with the utmost obstinacy and determination; and if we do not heartily believe in the justice of our cause and the worth of a victory, we had better recognise to ourselves the hollowness of our opposition before a half-hearted assault entails a tremendous defeat. But if, on the contrary, these questions are matters of conscience; if we have at heart the great principles whose names we have so constantly on our lips, then we are justified, and more than justified, we are required, to postpone every other object to this end—to assault the fortress from all

sides, to attack the outworks and to besiege the citadel—to make no peace and hear of no compromise till religious equality is an accomplished fact, and toleration an antiquated history. (Applause.) And if we will be true to this great purpose, the power of Nonconformity is no slight matter, and is not unequal to the strain which will be cast upon it. There are no means of ascertaining the number of Nonconformist electors. If the state of affairs has not changed since the religious census, there must be many seats in Parliament which might be carried for a Nonconformist candidate. At present the number of such candidates is disproportionately small, and in all ecclesiastical questions the decision of the House of Commons affords no test of the opinion of the population. But even where Nonconformist candidates are impossible, the Dissenters have it in their power in numbers of cases to secure that no Liberal shall be elected who will not accept to the fullest extent the political consequences of the doctrine of religious equality—(continued applause)—which all Liberals are ready to subscribe, but which so few Liberals are ready to carry into operation. It seems to me that two questions—the Amendment of the Education Act and the disestablishment of the English Church—should be made test questions by Nonconformists in every borough and county election, and that on the acceptance of our programme in respect to these matters our future support should strictly depend. It is not necessary that we should vote for Tories; simple abstention will suffice for the defeat of Liberals who are false to what should be made a cardinal point in the Liberal platform. Of 110 Liberal members for boroughs returned, after a contest, to the present Parliament, 60 per cent were returned by majorities of less than one-tenth of the electors, and 90 per cent were returned by majorities of less than one-fifth. It is certain that in most, if not in all, these cases the refusal of the Nonconformist support would change the character of the return. (Hear, hear.) It is said that the result would be the advent of the Conservatives to power. I reply that open enemies are better than traitorous friends—(loud cheers)—and it is far preferable that we should owe our wrongs to those who are in principle conscientiously opposed to us, than that the same wrongs should be inflicted on us by those whom we have spent labour and time and

money to support, and who, calling themselves our representatives, yet suffer themselves to be tools for promoting the policy we abhor. And, besides, Liberals in opposition will have time to ponder on the claims of those "humble friends" whom they never recognise from the elevation of the Treasury Bench. (Laughter.) The temporary withdrawal of our support will be a marvellous stimulant to Liberal statesmen—(hear, hear)—and Conservatives in office will give Liberal members the leisure to study the Liberal creed, and to get an insight into the principles which they now underrate or ignore. It is alleged, however, that necessary reforms will be arrested, and important measures delayed, if we break up the Liberal party. What are those necessary reforms? (Hear, hear.) We know—none better than the Nonconformists, who have ever toiled for the social elevation of the masses, with whom they are in close contact and sympathy—how many and how much needed are the measures of social legislation; but it is yet to be proved that those measures are dependent on the union of the so-called Liberal party. That party, as it appears in the House of Commons, has not lately shown the zeal, or the ability, or the discretion in dealing with these questions that should induce us to postpone in their behalf the claims already so often and so long delayed. And as regards political reforms, the ballot, army reform and the position of the House of Lords are matters which may as well wait the settlement of our claims as take precedence of them in time or importance. (Applause.) Besides, we have no option. Our representative in the House of Commons, Mr. Miall—(loud cheers)—has been challenged by the leader of the Government to take his support elsewhere if he cannot conscientiously give it to the Ministry. Through him we have been defied by a Government, arrogant in its strength, and scornful of its power, and confident in the disunion of Nonconformists. This disunion, or want of union, must be repaired by prompt and effectual organization. (Hear, hear.) An appeal should go out from this meeting to all classes and sections of Dissenters throughout the country, urging them to form committees in every borough and in every important town. (Applause.) The circular should contain a clear statement of the Nonconformist claims. The discontent which prevails has been fanned into open revolt by

a special wrong, which, irritating as it is, is yet insignificant in comparison with the principles which lie behind. It is, above all things, important that, having been forced into opposition, we should not return to our allegiance until not only the small grievance is removed, but the great principle fully admitted. The withdrawal of the 25th clause will undo one effect of a false policy. Let us, however, recognise that our dissatisfaction is with the policy itself, much more than with any of its particular results. (Applause.) These are mere indications of the mischievous doctrine from which they spring, and their removal will only make way for some fresh offence, so long as the doctrines themselves are maintained and defended. Armed with such a manifesto, the local committees should in every case and immediately seek a conference with their members and lay their demands before them. This is the time for plain speaking. A general election may come this year, and is almost certain in the course of the next eighteen months, and at that election the Nonconformists must be prepared to show that they are no longer to be trifled with—that there is a limit to the patience of the most devoted followers and most humble friends, and that they who have ever been the most earnest and unselfish workers in the Liberal cause will now require from those whom they have helped to power a full recognition of all their rights, and a complete assertion of Liberal principles. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. JOHN J. STITT, of Liverpool, moved the following resolution:

"That, after grave deliberation, this Conference is compelled to conclude that the educational policy unfortunately adopted by her Majesty's Government is hostile to the interests of religious liberty, since—1. Under the Elementary Education Acts sums of money may be paid from the rates for the support of sectarian schools. 2. By the large and unnecessary increase of the grants in aid of denominational schools, in addition to the payments made from the rates, sectarian organisations for education may be entirely sustained without private subscriptions, and, as the result, the education of the people is to a large and increasing extent given in to the charge of the clergy of the Church of England and the priests of the Church of Rome. Every effort having been made to induce the Government to reconsider a policy which reverses the whole course of modern legislation, this Conference, believing that the cause of religious freedom is of more importance than any ties of party, appeals to the Nonconformists of Great Britain to declare that they will not accept as a satisfactory representative any

candidate for a seat in the House of Commons who will not pledge himself to the amendment of the Education Act, in the sense of the propositions adopted by this Conference."

He said: Ladies and gentlemen, though this is a Conference of Nonconformists, and we are avowedly here in that capacity, and though looking around us on the state of affairs in England, and seeing the dilemmas and absurdities into which the ecclesiastical polities of others have led them, I suppose I am speaking your feelings as I am my own, when I say that never did Nonconformity appear so lovely and precious as she does now; though that is so, were the questions we are discussing to-day, and have been discussing at this Conference, relating only to the interests of Nonconformity, I would not be upon the platform this morning to raise my hand to embarrass a Government, which with many imperfections, has some staunch friends, I trust, and to give to our hereditary foes, the Tories, even a momentary triumph. But it is because I believe that underlying our special grievances and interests as Nonconformists there lies a principle upon which the future progress, the life, and the best interests, in every sense, of my country depend, that I am here to-day. And, sir, there are two feelings with which a mover of a resolution such as this may look for a response from the audience he addresses. The acceptance of that resolution may convey to his mind very mingled feelings. If accepted with the enthusiasm with which you have been pleased to greet this resolution, as I read it, it shows at any rate that it accords with your judgment and feelings. But as a resolution itself it tells the mover of the reason, the painful reason, why it has to be moved at all. It is under a sense of almost unspeakable responsibility that I rise this morning to occupy the brief ten minutes allotted to me. I think I feel something of the responsibility of any advice being given to Nonconformists at the present crisis to alter the attitude they have hitherto sustained towards the Liberal party; for though the present circumstances, and still more the threatened circumstances, of the country may justify that change, you will agree with me that the interests involved are so momentous that it ought only to be contemplated as a step to be taken after every other resource has been exhausted. (Hear, hear.) It is in vain, after what we have seen in these con-

ferences, to shut our eyes to the fact that the allegiance of the Nonconformists to the Liberal party has been grievously relaxed and shaken, and the reasons for this are unhappily not far to seek. Were it only a question of ingratitude to us after what we have done in the past, such feelings might be suppressed; but when we remember that what has transpired affects those principles upon which our very existence has hitherto depended, no alternative seems to be left us but to say that principle shall be supreme over mere personal considerations. (Cheers.) The great cause of what has been styled the revolt of the Nonconformists arises from the introduction, the character, and the conduct of the Education Act. When we remember the part that we played at the last general election, when the great question that excited our sympathies and evoked our enthusiasm was the question of religious liberty as applied to Ireland, I say we had a right to insist and to expect that the continued steps of her Majesty's Government in their ecclesiastical and educational policy should be in harmony with the principles they themselves enunciated when they sought our sympathies. But instead of that, we have been "wounded in the house of our friends"—(hear, hear)—and measures have been introduced and pressed through the House in spite of the most earnest and the loudest remonstrances we could present against them, and carried by the votes of our Tory opponents. We had in Liverpool, a day or two ago, an illustrious Earl who occupied the chair of a vast assembly of the Conservative party; and when the natural languishment of that party required a stimulant, the stimulant that that noble Earl could give them was, to remind them not only of the utility of the party in the past, but of the policy which it might be called upon in the future to adopt. He said, "As a proof of the value of the Conservative party, take as an illustration the Education Bill of 1870. Do you suppose that the measure would ever have passed if there had not been a Conservative Opposition to back up the Ministry against their own followers? And depend upon it what was done then will have to be done again." A sentiment which evoked the cheers of the Conservatives; but surely is sufficient to bring a blush of shame, if such an emotion is capable of finding expression upon the faces of those who profess to be our leaders. We

have been accustomed lately to the charge of proving ourselves unreasonably obstructive, and, more seriously, still, of wishing to evade a compromise which has been said to have been entered into on our behalf in relation to this education question. The compromise we deny, the proof of it we call for. The Nonconformist party was taken by surprise by the rapidity with which the education measure was presented to Parliament, and pressed upon the attention of the country; and we hailed that measure, not completely understanding it, because it enunciated the new principle that Government, which had hitherto made its grants dependent upon religion in the schools, had at last arrived at the conclusion that for the future it would not recognise religion at all. That appeared to many to remove from their way an obstacle to their acceptance of a national education. But what was the attitude of Nonconformists? Though the denominational system had lasted for thirty years, and some thirteen millions of money had been spent upon it, and it being admitted in the end that it had failed to reach the very classes for whom it was intended, we nevertheless recognised the difficulty of introducing an educational bill without taking cognizance of the existing network of institutions all over the country, which the Government itself had been instrumental in calling into existence. In that spirit of forbearance, Mr. Henry Richard introduced an amendment into the House during the progress of the Bill to this effect, 'not wishing to interfere with the continued receipt of Government grants by existing schools," and so on. And in the town to which I belong a meeting of Nonconformists passed a resolution in almost similar terms. What was the spirit in which our generosity was requited? Do I use too strong language when I say that it was requited by deliberate betrayal? First, we had in the Education Act itself an extension of the time for the application for denominational schools; and you have heard this morning the result. That has enabled the denominationalists to cover districts with schools which will render School Boards unnecessary, except for the exercise of the compulsory power to fill those denominational schools, and the privilege also of paying fees. Then came the increase of 50 per cent in the assistance given to denominational schools. Then

came the deliberate violation, as it seems to me, of the pledge which Mr. Gladstone gave on the 16th of June—that it was the intention of the Government—and he gave that pledge under the pressure from the Nonconformists—to totally separate the School Board schools from the denominational schools, and so in this Act we have the strange, unlooked-for, the extraordinary doctrine of taxation of the people without the control of the people; we have the continuance of that spirit of bigotry, intolerance, and denominationalism which has been hitherto such a curse to this country. The practical question for us this morning is what in these circumstances are we to do? I confess I am not unmindful, nor would I have you unmindful, of the debt of gratitude which, as Nonconformists, we owe to that great statesman, Mr. Gladstone. I am not unmindful that it was to him we are indebted for the obliteration from the statute book of England of the hateful Church-rate. I am not unmindful that it is to him that we are indebted largely for such an amount of university reform as we at present possess; and last, not least, we are indebted to him for the noblest of all his achievements, the emancipation of the Irish Church by its disestablishment and disendowment. Such deeds as these have enshrined his name in the hearts of Nonconformists, who regard him with feelings of real affection and almost reverence. True, it seems almost incredible that one who had gone so far, and trod so firmly the path of religious equality by "levelling down," should in an evil moment have been beguiled into sanctioning so wretched and flagrantly retrogade a measure as that which is now agitating the country to its centre, rekindling all the sectarian animosities which it was hoped were dying out, and which now threaten effectually to impede the progress of the education which was regarded as the imperious necessity of our times. Well, gentlemen, all this is very trying, but still, I would fain feel, that spite of what has so far occurred, my confidence in Mr. Gladstone is not yet gone. Of his extreme conscientiousness and honesty of purpose I have never had a doubt; and, notwithstanding, all present appearances to the contrary, I would fain hope that even yet we shall not look in vain to him for a fair solution of the present educational difficulty—a repeal of the obnoxious 25th section, and a modification of the

Treasury grants to the denominational schools. Were this the only question at issue—I mean the English Education Act—I should think a loud reiteration of our objections and a firm remonstrance would suffice for their removal; but, unhappily the false step already taken in framing the English Education Act, in defiance of the principle of religious equality, has afforded the coveted opportunity to the Romish Hierarchy in Ireland to make a demand which, for its startling audacity, has perhaps not been equalled in the present generation—the demand that the education of Irish youth shall be handed over to the Irish priesthood, the funds being provided by the British taxpayers! Such a demand might well cause the ears of Protestant England, Scotland, and Wales—and last, though not least, those who in Ireland itself have so recently had to submit to the disendowment of their Church—to tingle. Surely such a demand should have been denounced and rejected by Government with no bated breath, and the natural anxieties of the nation set at rest as speedily as possible. Well, let those who expected anything so reasonable listen to the oracular utterances of two illustrious members of the Cabinet—the President of the Board of Trade and Lord Hartington, Chief Secretary for Ireland, who, acting apparently upon the maxim ascribed to Talleyrand, that "speech was intended to conceal thought," have commended these monstrous and extravagant demands to the "candid consideration of the Liberal party," to be regarded by them "in a conciliatory spirit!" Now, sir, much as Nonconformists value allegiance to party, they value infinitely more allegiance to conscience and to truth, and this Conference has not been held an hour too soon to enable us in language which cannot be misunderstood to say to the Government that we intend to insist on a retracing of the false step already taken. The moment it becomes apparent that there is an intention to yield to the demands of the Irish priesthood, that moment the whole support of the Nonconformists will be forfeited, be the consequences to party what they may. Such is the firm attitude which I conceive it is our duty to assume—remonstrance regarding the present, and prompt secession should the dread contingency to which I have alluded arise. If this is the result of our Conference and this resolution, we shall not, in my opinion, have met in vain. (Cheers.)

Mr. R. W. DALE: I second the resolution. Loud cries of "Speak, speak" arose in the meeting, and Mr. Dale requested permission to reserve his speech until an amendment of which notice had been received had been submitted.

The Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY: It has been suggested that the wording of the resolution might appear to sanction denominational grants which have not been increased. This was not the meaning which was intended to be conveyed; and, to prevent any misunderstanding, the secretaries propose that the words, "*By the grants in aid of denominational schools, which have been largely and unnecessarily increased,*" should be substituted for the words, "*By the large and unnecessary increase of the grants in aid of denominational schools.*" (Hear, hear.) The resolution expresses an objection to all grants for denominational purposes, whether increased or not.

The Rev. J. G. ROGERS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,—I am extremely sorry to seem to take a position apparently of antagonism to the committee who have arranged for these proceedings, but I sincerely hope that the amendment which I have to propose will carry out more effectually the intentions of the committee than even the resolution which they have submitted to you. I do not understand the meaning of the strong words to which I listened just now, and in which I fully sympathise, unless we are prepared to put those words into practice, and let the Liberal party understand clearly that if we are to support them they must come up to our programme. The resolution appeals to the Nonconformists of Great Britain to declare that they will not accept as a satisfactory representative any candidate for a seat in the House of Commons who will not pledge himself to the amendment of the Education Act in the sense of the propositions adopted by this Conference. I simply wish to substitute for the words "will not accept as a satisfactory representative," the shorter, more direct, and more decisive words, "will not vote for any candidate who does not pledge himself to these principles." (No, no.) That may be said to be taking an extreme position, but I beg to say unless we take that position we may just as well never have held this Conference at all. (Applause.) The Liberal party in the House of Commons believe that however we may talk, when the time of action comes

we shall be just as we have always been found, the foremost members of their election committees and the most loyal voters on the day of polling. I want them to understand if we are to be that, they must accept our position. (Applause.) Observe what we are asking them to do! We are not asking them to pledge themselves to the disestablishment of the English Church, we are simply asking them to say that as they depend upon Nonconformist support they should be prepared in the House of Commons to give their vote against doing Nonconformists injustice. This is all we are asking, and nothing more. My friend Mr. Stitt has told you just now that Mr. Gladstone carried the abolition of Church-rates. I am rather strongly inclined to suppose that we carried it, and I am inclined to suppose, too, that the Whig party in the House of Commons never understood what they had to do until a few Dissenters at Exeter stood aloof, and would not vote for Mr. Coleridge because he would not pledge himself on the Church-rate question. (Applause.) That is what I want us to do. This resolution does not say that under any circumstances we will not vote for a Liberal candidate except he accepts this programme. I can conceive of circumstances arising in which it might be necessary for us even to put in subordination these principles of ours in deference to great national interests, but I do not see any probability of these questions presenting themselves at present. What had the Liberal party to give us which the Tory party are not prepared to give us too if we want them? We are not in the position in which we have been before. And that is what our leaders forget. The great questions in which we were interested have almost all been settled. There is no question about the repeal of the Corn Laws; there is no question about the extension of the suffrage; the Ballot will shortly be given. I want to know what single article there remains on the Liberal programme for the sake of which we should subordinate our Dissenting principles. (Applause.) I think it is necessary that we should take decided action if we are not to lose every seat that falls vacant during the present Parliament. What is the game they have played at present? In the West Riding an honourable and distinguished and loyal member of the Liberal party, Mr. Isaac Holden, comes forward to contest the seat on our side. What happens? Why, Mr. Edward Akroyd Liberal mem-

ber for Halifax, goes and places his name on the committee of the Conservative candidate. (Hisses, and cries of "Shame.") What happened at Plymouth the other day, when Mr. Rooker—one of the most loyal, independent, and earnest supporters of the party in that town, a man who had been foremost in fighting the battle for the Liberal candidates, who had brought the power of the Dissenters again and again to bear on behalf of Church candidates—when he contests the place, what happens? Why, forsooth, because he was a Dissenter, and took our view, these Churchmen, who had been indebted to him in years past, declined to vote, and a Conservative candidate was returned. That is the kind of game they have played through all the Liberal constituencies. We have strength to make the opposite section respect and understand us; but if there is a possibility that in some way or other we can be led to forget our distinct utterances at this Conference, then I say that the only result will be disaster, confusion, disunion, and a split in the Liberal party as a whole. We are doing vast service to the Liberal party by taking our ground firmly, and saying that at all costs we will stand by it. My friend Mr. Stitt has spoken of Mr. Gladstone. I yield to no man in this assembly in the affection, admiration, and respect which I have for the Prime Minister of England. I believe in him up to this hour. I do not believe Mr. Gladstone meant to betray us, but I do believe that Mr. Gladstone himself needs to be saved from some of the men around him. (Loud applause.) I believe Mr. Gladstone needs to be taught one great lesson, that is, if he means to conciliate the Nonconformists of England he must ask the Right Honourable W. E. Forster to accept some other seat. (Loud applause, the whole Conference rising and renewing the cheers again and again.) But if Mr. Gladstone is to have strength given to him it must be by our determination. There are plenty of Akroyds, there are plenty of trimming Liberals, there are plenty of men whose hearts are in the cave though they may be on the benches of the Liberal party; and in order to save the party and to save our leader from them, let us say to-day we have a position and we mean to keep it. If it should be that war broke out and we wanted to go in on the side of peace, there is no irrevocable pledge given here to prevent us doing that. If circumstances may alter, well then our views may

alter as to our conduct. All we call upon the Nonconformists of England to do is, so long as the present state of things continues, not to vote for any man who will not take part in undoing this grievous wrong which has been done by a Liberal Ministry to their most faithful and most devoted friends. (Loud applause.)

Rev. WILLIAM BINNS, (of Birkenhead): Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,—I beg to second that amendment,—(hear, hear),—because I believe that whatever our hands find to do the soundest policy is to do it with all our might. (Cheers.) I do not think that the resolution is doing the work which our hands find to do with all our might, and the amendment, though even it does not go quite so far as I should be inclined to go,—(laughter),—is still an improvement upon the resolution. I say whatever power we possess let us make that power distinctly felt in the country; whatever our opinions may be let us speak them out in such a clear, and in such a forcible way that there shall be no possibility of misunderstanding them. (Hear, hear.) If we pass that resolution it is quite likely that our true position may be profoundly misunderstood, as it has been misunderstood before. What are we asked to say? That we will not accept such and such persons as satisfactory candidates. Why, over and over again in times past we have said that such and such persons introduced to us by the so-called Liberal party were not satisfactory candidates, and we could not accept them as satisfactory candidates, and yet we have taken them after all. I do not want us to do that kind of thing again. I maintain the really soundest policy is to insist upon bringing out a candidate who will himself say what the truth is, and who will fight for the truth, and if only 20 voters in a borough or 200 voters in a county, record their votes for him, I say it is better to stand upon principle and be defeated than to effect any compromise whatsoever. (Cheers.) We are not the weak party that the resolution supposes us to be, so that we are bound to go about with bated breath and with whispering humbleness. We are one-half of the population of the country, and we have many influential members in the House of Commons, and it would be possible even to quote from the speeches of Mr. Stansfeld and Mr. Winterbotham and Mr. Lowe sentiments quite as advanced as any that have been expressed at this Conference. Mr. Gladstone is himself, at once, our difficulty and our

hope—(laughter)—and he must know what our true position is. His education is not as yet quite completed; he is not yet absolutely emancipated from the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity. (Loud cheers.) But he is a growing man. (Laughter.) He has been growing all the time that he has been in Parliament, and, if we are willing to help him, he will go on growing until he will come round to occupy the advanced platform that is occupied by Mr. Rogers' amendment. I say, then, let us help him to do so by our own plain speaking. At times, now, when we listen to some of his speeches, and read the speeches he has made, we catch the echoes of sentiments in them that are more appropriate to the days when he was the pet of Oxford University and the author of that celebrated essay on "Church and State" than to the representative of a Liberal party, borne into power to carry out the most advanced programme that any Liberal ministry was yet pledged to. (Hear, hear.) If we say distinctly what we mean, Mr. Gladstone will come up to what there is best in him; he will be true to his own inspirations and aspirations. (Hear, hear.) We are asked by the resolution to encourage Mr. Gladstone to go backward. (No, no.) Let us rather encourage him to go forward. At any rate the resolution does not ask Mr. Gladstone to go forward with all the energy that Mr. Dale and Mr. Stitt are prepared to go forward. Why do not they want to encourage Mr. Gladstone to go as far forward as they themselves are prepared to go. (Hear, hear.) The amendment which has been introduced by Mr. Rogers is really the soundest principle that we can adopt here, just because it is the most thorough-going and consistent. Suppose we do by adopting such an amendment, what they call divide the Liberal party? What is the Liberal party? I have yet to learn what parties there are in existence in this England of ours except two,—the party of religious equality and the party which is opposed to religious equality, and we feel that most other political differences are minor matters, and that our enthusiasm can only be kindled into a steady glow by the religious equality party. (Cheers.) If Mr. Gladstone be asked to co-operate with us earnestly he will. If he will not, why the Russell, father and son, are as good as the Gladstone, father and son. (Laughter and cheers.) It seems to me that Lord Russell and Lord Amberley are really at one with

us. And if neither the Gladstone nor the Russell clan will do our wish, who can tell to what extent Mr. Disraeli will yet be able to educate the Conservative party? (Loud laughter.) Mr. Disraeli is a great teacher, and they are apt pupils—if we give him and them another opportunity we shall do no great harm. Let us hang out our banners to this effect on the outward walls, and be determined that in support of complete religious equality

> "The minds we sway by and the hearts we bear,
> Shall never lag with doubt nor shake with fear."

(Loud cheers.)

Mr. HENRY VINCENT, who was enthusiastically received, said: I rise to address you under great embarrassment, because I am anxious above all things that this Conference should be thoroughly united in its principles and policy. All the traditions of my life make me in favour of the emphatic terms of the amendment; but I believe at the same time, properly understood, the original resolution means the same thing. (Hear, hear.) I am quite prepared to support one or the other, or both together. (Laughter.) We have arrived at a crisis of our fate, and the question is, are the Nonconformists prepared to make their power felt in a constitutional way at the approaching elections? Gentlemen, I recall the year 1847, when the Liberal party was prepared to endow the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, and was almost prepared to make it a Cabinet measure. We assembled in Crosby Hall, and resolved that we would not vote for any candidate unless he pledged himself to oppose the principle of extended endowments, and I venture to say that we defeated that policy. But, gentlemen, you must not forget to-day that you stand in the presence of no mere question of an educational character; you are in the presence of a political and ecclesiastical conspiracy against the liberty of the English people. (Loud cheers.) We do not charge Mr. Gladstone with being the leader of that conspiracy, but there is a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself. Every administration in this nation is partly guided by the advice of unseen men, who are behind the scenes, and who give weighty influence to every cabinet. These men fear the power of Nonconformity, and while professing to serve it try to undermine

it. They fear the possible union of the Nonconformists and the advanced working classes. They are anxious, by a subtle and underhanded scheme, to stud this nation with so-called schools, in which the priestly influence will be dominant, and through which they will work that Tory power and that Tory policy, which would have destroyed England long ago had it not been for the independent and heroic action of the leaders of Nonconformity, who, from the days of Oliver Cromwell until now, have been the upholders of all that promotes the glory and the freedom of this nation. (Loud cheers.) I say, then, you will act wisely to declare that you will not accept any candidate who is not prepared to undo the work of the Education Act, and who is not prepared in all future legislation to recognise, not a Nonconformist polity, but a Christian and a just polity—the polity of absolute equality before the law for all ranks and orders of the people. If you say that you will not vote for a man unless he comes up to this standard so much the better. Above all, let me remind you of our great traditions. We are of the blood of those who always fought for perfect freedom—and I say it of myself, for I am an hereditary as well as a Nonconformist by conviction,—descended from the man who preached God's judgment against the guilty city in the infamous reign of Charles II.; and am not prepared to-day, in the memory of the suffering of our forefathers, to surrender a particle of those great principles which underlie liberty, and without which the very word "liberty" is a mockery and a snare. (Loud cheers.) Remember, finally, that you have something other to do than to cheer to-day or to pass either the original resolution or the amendment or both. You on your return to your respective homes are bound to go there with tongues of fire. You are not intended if you carry out all your principles loyally towards God and the world, you are not intended to sit down in quietude when you reach your homes. To all classes of Liberal Churchmen, to all bodies of Methodists, to all Dissenters, to the great bulk of the intelligent middle and working classes, you are bound to say—"We are Nonconformists by the force of circumstances, as the result of a despotism that drove our fathers from the Church of our country." But beyond and above that you are citizens of the English nation, and you have sworn an oath stronger than the oath of Hannibal that this

country, in the language of Abraham Lincoln, shall not remain half slave and half free, but the future, when your principles shall be triumphant, shall be a future of absolute equality before the law, a future of civil and religious freedom, a future that shall swallow or destroy all priestcraft, and hand over the glory and greatness of England to independent cultivated minds, to a conscience free from all State control, to the domination of perfect and absolute liberty. (Loud cheers.)

Rev. R. ABERCROMBIE, of Cardiff: Mr. Chairman, the throwing up of hats before now has been an historical event. In the last century, when Mr. Wedderburn delivered a speech in favour of war against the North American Colonies, it is recorded that all the gentlemen of the Privy Council threw up their hats. That was an historical event of evil omen. But this morning, when Mr. Richard delivered his speech, giving such a definite announcement of the policy he proposed to follow, he elicited a throwing up of hats and a cheering which will be an event of the best omen for the future of Nonconformity, and for the future of our nation. In that speech he referred to the motive of gratitude as constituting an argument against our position. It seems to me that our gratitude has been disappointed, our gratitude has been betrayed, and our hearts have grown sick, for political gratitude certainly does agree with the definition which has been given, that to a very large extent it is an expectation of future favours. We have heard a little about the history of Nonconformity in our land, and we have passed by the ages of toleration and equality, and I trust we are now getting very near to another age—the age of unity. The Liberal party, as I understand it, is a party of progress; and it is also a party of great traditions. No traditions ought to be so dear to us as the traditions of freedom. I trust that we shall not hand down any new-fangled ultramontane *quasi* Liberal, really Conservative, traditions to those who shall come after us. We live in an age of education—(Cries of "Question.") —education not only of self-appointed censors like Mr. Arnold, but the education also of political parties by their chiefs, and the education, we trust, of their chiefs, in this case, by political parties. Even if we were not likely to succeed, we should be bound to fight in this cause. The history of our country, and of our party, has

been the history of struggling minorities who have made themselves into majorities. But we are likely, nay, we are sure to succeed. As you have heard already this morning, we are the descendants of Reformers—("Question, question")—and we are determined ourselves to fight, not as they did, with swords—(Renewed cries of "Question")—and by total abstinence, and by the passive resistance adopted by Mr. Harvey Adams. Whether they take our couches, or weather glasses, or our timepieces, they will only show that they do not really know the true political time of day. I apologise for intruding on the patience of everybody, but I just wanted to say one thing. A reference was made last night to Methodists, and I beg to state that it is only one party—the old Methodists, who stand aloof from our movement—(hear, hear)—and that all the other parties of Methodists are heartily with us. We cannot doubt that in the end, in consequence of the Irish aspect of the question, the Old Methodists will be on our side too. (Cheers.)

Mr. THOMAS SNAPE (of Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, I object to the amendment that has been submitted to you for two or three reasons which I will very briefly state. Already a considerable division of opinion has been expressed upon this question in the Conference Committee, and it is only after very grave and long deliberation that the form of the resolution which has been submitted to you has been adopted by that committee. I think that if there were no other reason one is sufficient, and that is that the many movements which appeal chiefly to Nonconformists for their support have adopted this principle in very nearly the whole of their meetings, and if we go on with it a little longer we shall find ourselves so pledged that it will be impossible to find any Member of Parliament for whom we can vote. We are simply attaching fetters to ourselves that we shall find it very difficult hereafter to remove. (No, no.) Another reason which I think to be fatal to the amendment has been submitted by Mr. Rogers himself, when he told us that in the case of great Imperial questions his own amendment would not be binding. It therefore simply relegates the pledge to the judgment and decision of those who might give it as to whether the question upon which a general election might turn were Imperial in its

character or no—(hear, hear)—and if that be the case the pledge would simply be valueless. It is by no means so certain that questions may not arise and that within a comparatively short time which may necessitate the Government to appeal to the country, and it is possible that under such circumstances many who sympathise heartily and thoroughly with the principles of the resolution would find themselves unable to adhere to such a pledge as Mr. Rogers wishes them to give. I have another reason, and that is, that I am persuaded we cannot get a unanimous vote for the resolution if it be altered as Mr. Rogers desires. It is desirable above all things that this, one of the most important, I think I might say the most important resolution of the Conference, should be adopted with perfect unanimity. There cannot be a question that a large number of votes will not be given for it, and possibly a large number may be given against it. I will say no more, save on the subject of the resolution itself, that I believe it pledges us quite as far as we are able to go;—("no, no," "hear, hear")—that the only objection which I have seen which has been urged against the position that we are taking to-day, is that we are a sectarian party, forming an organisation to extinguish sects. I venture to think that instead of being so we are simply the advanced guard of the Liberal party, advocating those great principles which lie at the foundation of that party, but which at present seems to be hidden owing to the action of the Government. Though there has been a considerable amount of diffidence and reluctance expressed, particularly at the Free-trade Hall meeting, as to the warfare that we were undertaking, I think that we need not on that account suppose that eventually triumph will not be ours. It is only the jaunty swash-buckler who, like M. Ollivier, makes war with a light heart, who comes off worst in the fray. He who counts the cost, and who weighs well what he is about, as we have done before we have taken this action, is more likely in the end to succeed. I think when a huntsman makes the mistake of supposing that a high stone wall is a low mud heap over which he can easily canter, he is likely, as I trust Mr. Forster is also likely, to find himself landed a cropper in the ditch on the other side. Cheers.)

Mr. R. W. DALE: As I wished to speak on the practical side of

this question I was extremely anxious to be permitted to withhold my speech until some common ground could be found between the mover and seconder of the resolution and the mover and seconder of the amendment. Let me express in the clearest and most emphatic way that if I had not thought that the original resolution meant every syllable that Mr. Rogers means by his amendment, I should never have consented to second it. (Hear, hear.) We are both agreed that there are certain great national exigencies conceivable, under the strain of which it would be our duty, as it was the policy of our fathers, to postpone the pressure of our own principles upon the actual administration of the country. If a general election were to take place under these circumstances, if the return of the Conservatives to power meant plunging into a great and unjust war, and the return of the Liberals the preservation of an honourable peace, there is not a member of this Conference but would be prepared to say, "We will take the very worst Liberal we can vote for rather than permit the other party to come in." This is what is meant by the original resolution. I think after the expression of thought and feeling in the Conference this morning, it may be necessary perhaps to express that a little more clearly—(hear, hear)—and I have the pleasure of announcing that Mr. Rogers withdraws his amendment—(hear, hear)—in favour of a rider to the resolution. I will read the latter part of the resolution :—

"Every effort having been made to induce the Government to reconsider a policy which reverses the whole course of modern legislation, this Conference, believing that the cause of religious freedom is of more importance than any ties of party, appeals to the Nonconformists of Great Britain to declare that they will not accept as a satisfactory representative any candidate for a seat in the House of Commons who will not pledge himself to the amendment of the Education Act, in the sense of the propositions adopted by this Conference ; *and further, to make it clearly understood, that except under the pressure of great national exigencies they will not give any such candidate their support.*"

(Hear, hear.) Let me further say that there has been no real difference of opinion in the Conference Committee as to the policy that this Conference should recommend the Nonconformists of this country to pursue. Practically we all mean the same thing, but you know we all have our different ways of saying the same thing,

and it is wonderful what great affection and admiration a Conference of Nonconformists always seems to manifest for the most vigorous language which the English dictionary supplies. (Laughter.) And now having submitted this resolution to the Conference, let me call your attention to one or two points. The principle affirmed in the resolution is that the cause of religious freedom is of more importance than any ties of party. (Hear, hear.) That would be true if the Liberal party at the present moment were what it always has been, but there are special circumstances in the position of the Liberal party, which give it special emphasis and force. We have heard a great deal about the hesitation and uncertainty that characterised the movement of Nonconformists two years ago—what are we to say about the policy of the Liberal party itself at the present moment, when we find men professing to be Liberals in the North-West Riding pledging themselves to support the Conservative candidate ?. (Cries of "Shame.") It is quite time that we made it clearly understood that, unless the more Conservative section of the Liberal party is prepared to recognise the obligation of party ties and support the candidate who comes out under our colours, we cannot be expected to respect party ties, and support the candidate that comes out under their colours. Before we are charged with deserting our leaders, let us know what the great chief of the advanced Liberals, who has been out of the conflict for two years, has to say on this question. I trust very soon after the meeting of Parliament Mr. Bright—(loud applause)—will be in his place again ; and before any charge is flung at us of deserting our leaders, let us see whether our great leader, who led us to the feet of Mr. Gladstone, will not be prepared under the present circumstances, if the Government shows no signs of penitence, to lead us into open revolt. (Applause.) But why is it necessary to talk of the possibility of preserving the ties of party ? Gentlemen, we have done everything that we were able to do, in order to induce our leaders to accept a wiser, more just, and more generous policy. We sent memorials to the Prime Minister and petitions to the House of Commons ; resolutions were passed by great representative bodies of Nonconformists, bodies representing in some cases powerful Nonconformist communities

scattered over the whole kingdom, and in other cases the Nonconformists of counties and districts of England. These resolutions were expressed in the most emphatic form, but have been practically disregarded. We secured division after division in the House of Commons, in order to test the opinions of the members of that House, and again and again we were beaten. We have sent deputation after deputation up to Mr. Gladstone himself, to Lord Ripon, and to the Vice-President of the Privy Council, and from none of them have we received any such assurances as justify us in supposing that if we fail to organise our strength and use it they will grant us the concessions that we desire. Now, it is time that we relied altogether upon ourselves—(hear, hear);—and what I ask you, gentlemen, to do is this:—when you return to the localities which have sent you here, if you have an organisation already existing that covers the Nonconformists of the constituency to which you belong, remain faithful to that organisation, and sustain it in the utmost possible vigour. If you have an organisation already in existence that does not cover the whole ground, and is not at present very effective, try to make it as effective as possible instead of starting a new one. If you have no organisation at all existing in your constituencies, start one before another week is over—(hear, hear);—an organisation that shall include within its limits the great mass of the Nonconformists of the constituency. Do not let it be supposed for a moment that by asking for the political organisation of Nonconformists we intend, even by implication, to suggest any thought of rivalry to that great society which is represented on this platform by Mr. Edward Miall this morning. I believe that there is no society in England that has been so ably served, that has prosecuted a more honourable policy, that has more steadily and faithfully striven to secure the great ends for which it was established than the Liberation Society. (Cheers.) It does happen, however, sometimes that you cannot get a strong Liberation Committee in a constituency; if you cannot get that, call your committee a Nonconformist Association.

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

And what we want is to get the constituencies organised somehow

and at once, and organised for the express purpose of securing the return of members to Parliament who will vote, and vote at once, for the reversal of the Government policy on the education question, and for embodying in legislation the resolutions adopted at this Conference. People are always asking us to give this Act a fair trial. Half the men that ask us to do it do not really mean what they say. They know it is a bad thing, they know the longer it lasts the worse it will appear to be, but they shrink from the political cost of endeavouring to pursue a just and right policy; and they think that the expense involved in rescinding the objectionable provisions of this Act—and adopting a wiser and juster policy—is too great for the Liberal party to bear at present. Talk to many of the friends of the Government on this matter, they have hardly a good word to say for any of those provisions of the Act to which we object. The Act reminds me of a man of whom I have heard, who was so wretched an object that his friends said he walked about the world only to save his funeral expenses. (Laughter.) Now I think we must make the Liberal party understand that it may be more expensive to keep the Education Act alive, than to give it a prompt and decent interment. The real question, gentlemen, before the Conference is this—whether, on your return to your localities, you will take means to secure that the political power of Nonconformists shall be used for the great purpose for which in God's good providence that political power has been entrusted to us? Do you intend to work hard at the next election for the return of a candidate to Parliament, simply because he has large commercial experience, and calls himself a Liberal? because he has a seat near your borough, and patronises the dissenting tradesmen? because he is the cousin of a Liberal lord, and the brother of a Liberal baronet? (Hear, hear.) Are these the purposes for which you employ that power which has been won for you at a great price? (No, no.) I know your mind, and I am delighted to find that the resolution to which some of us had looked forward with some apprehension is about to be carried not merely unanimously but enthusiastically by this great Conference. (Loud cheers.) Notice has been given of another amendment which we accept; it is to introduce the words "and to the extent," so that the resolution will read "in

the sense and to the extent of the propositions adopted by this Conference."

Mr. E. M. RICHARDS, M.P.: I feel I owe you some apology for venturing to intrude upon you after the able addresses that have been already made, but I have been accustomed all my life to endeavour to deal with questions in a practical form, and I feel very much the effect of the few words addressed to us by Mr. Dale as to what is to be the consequences of this Conference; and, gentlemen, I do not hesitate at all to say that better we had never met at all than for us to go away with any half-heartedness; better that the Nonconformists had remained at home, unless Nonconformists, when they return home, are prepared to carry out what they now throw up their hats and cheer for. There is a very homely proverb that "Heaven helps those who help themselves," and I am sure you will agree with me that if we are to expect success we must do something to deserve it. (Hear, hear.) And, let me say, Welshman as I am,—(cheers)—let me say, that if you Englishmen will only do what Welshmen have done, you will have carried into effect nearly all that has been recommended to you by this Conference. My friends, what have Welshmen done? They have given the key-note to what constituencies throughout the Kingdom ought to have done. First and foremost, the men of Merthyr—(hear, hear)—working men, said, in language that could not be mistaken, to their employers,—"we honour you, Mr. Crawshay, we love you, but we want Henry Richard to represent us. (Cheers.) Ninety per cent of the constituents are Nonconformists, and we want to have a voice in the English Parliament, and that voice must be by Henry Richard." Well, gentlemen, that is really what is wanted by you in your own homes. I think what you have to put before your friends and neighbours is this,—"If we want religious equality in the Imperial Parliament we must send men who mean the same thing as we do." And, gentlemen, as a humble individual myself, I cannot help saying that I am to a very great extent an example of what principle can do. I have the honour to represent a county in Wales, a Nonconformist county, who at the last election knew no principle but religious equality. (Hear, hear.) I went down into Cardiganshire almost unknown to the constituency except by

repute. I had a character for something like consistency, and the Nonconformists felt that they could not have a man who exactly suited them from their own locality; they were not content with the cousin of the Squire or the nephew of the Baron, they felt that they had better get a Dissenter to represent them as they themselves were Dissenters. And, gentlemen, sacrifice after sacrifice was made by those poor men. Scores of men, as my honourable friend has told you, were turned out of house and home to send Mr. Gladstone and those who are with him into power, and how could I face those men in Cardiganshire? How could I tell them that they had done what is expected of them to do again when I feel that the principles for which I was sent to represent them have been forsaken by those in whom we put our trust. (Cheers.) I have the satisfaction of knowing myself that I walked into the lobby on every division with my honourable friend to my right, and with Mr. Miall. I felt most strongly when this question was before the House of Commons, that we were drifting into what must lead us into disunion and into strife; I joined with my honourable friends around me in endeavouring to persuade the Government to yield to some representations that might have averted the consequences that have now followed, but all in vain; and we have to lament not only the passing of the Act of 1870, but the spirit in which that Act has been carried out. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Dale has told us to go home and to form associations—Nonconformist associations. Gentlemen, we in Swansea have anticipated that advice; we have formed a Nonconformist Association, and I have the honour of being President of that association. (Hear, hear.) I have been deputed by that association to ask this Conference to send forth no uncertain sound as to what shall be the objects of the various constituencies through the kingdom; and I may say, Mr. Chairman, that I have attended these meetings with a weight of great responsibility upon my mind. I am not unmindful of all that we have to thank the present Government for. I feel a deep debt of gratitude for many acts they have done, not the least that we have been preserved in peace. (Hear, hear.) But I have also felt wavering for the last two or three days, I confess I have become confirmed, in the opinion that was dawning continually on my mind that whatever the consequences

may be we are bound as honest men with strong convictions, we are bound now to say that the time is come, when the ties of political party must, if necessary, give way to principles—(hear, hear)—and it is in that spirit that I am ready to adopt either the resolution or the amendment that was proposed to this Conference. I confess, however, that I rather prefer the resolution with the rider, proposed by Mr. Dale. Let me say one word as to the spirit in which this act has been carried out in Wales. Last month, or November, we Welshmen anticipating you Englishmen—(laughter)—had a Conference of our own at Aberystwith, and thanks to Mr. Gee, the Mayor of Denbigh (that great man, because great he is, and he has led the Welshmen in their principles for some time past) thanks to Mr. Gee for the tone he gave to the meeting, we met and settled with a unanimous voice, that if this education question was to go forward to a satisfactory issue we must stand upon nothing but a secular platform. (Applause.) We were favoured at that Conference by the presence of the honourable member for Anglesey. I am sorry he is not here to-day; but he gave us some most instructive lessons as to the manner in which the Inspectors sent by the Education Department had conducted the inquiries in that county. He told us that two inspectors were sent down into Anglesey against the remonstrances of himself and others, who wished that in a county confessedly Nonconformist—ninety-five per cent would not be too great a proportion,—but notwithstanding the remonstrances of Mr. Davies, two inspectors, Churchmen, were sent down into that county, who not only discouraged the formation of School Boards, but who refused to have School Boards established because it was contemplated that Church schools were to be built in some of the parishes. (Shame.) I myself do not speak out of book when I say that inspectors sent down into my own district have also invariably sided rather with Churchmen than with Dissenters. I felt that I had a duty to perform in attending this Conference, and although I know I stand in the way of gentlemen who can address you with far more eloquence than I can, I trust I have said a few words that may induce you to do as we poor Welshmen have done, help ourselves, form Nonconformist associations, support only those men in whom you heartily believe. Support Dissenters if you can

get them—(hear, hear)—if you cannot get Dissenters, well then support good Churchmen. If you will only carry out the principle that we poor "Taffys" have carried out at the last election, and subsequently then, gentlemen, the Conference of Manchester will be memorable in the history of Dissenters. If we have met and if our meeting is to end in throwing up of caps, in listening to eloquence such as I have rarely listened to before, if our meeting is to end in nothing more than that, well then, better that we had stayed at home, and Manchester had not seen our faces. (Loud cheers, and cries of "Vote.")

Mr. GRIMWADE, of Ipswich: I come from the East. We have not got all the wisdom there, but I ask whether the voting for this resolution will bar one from voting for a Liberal candidate on the one side, they having accepted our candidate on the other. That is a very important question: we have two members; I believe they will accept one,—but they won't accept both; shall we lose both our members, or, under this resolution, may we vote for the Liberal man, they pledging themselves to vote for ours?

Mr. R. W. DALE: This is a nice question of political casuistry, but my interpretation of the resolution would be,—vote for both candidates in order to carry one.

The CHAIRMAN called upon the Rev. C. Stovel, who had given in his name, to address the Conference, and stated that he had only two other speakers on his list. The assembly being very anxious to get to the vote,

Dr. RALEIGH proposed that the assembly should vote first, and hear the gentlemen afterwards.

The resolution was then put to the Conference and adopted most enthusiastically, the delegates waving their hats and cheering for some minutes.

As finally adopted, the resolution is as follows:—

That after grave deliberation this Conference is compelled to conclude that the educational policy unfortunately adopted by Her Majesty's Government is hostile to the interests of religious liberty, since—

1. Under the Elementary Education Act sums of money may be paid from the rates for the support of sectarian schools.
2. By the grants in aid of denominational schools, which have been largely and unnecessarily increased, in addition to the payments

made from the rates, sectarian organisations for education may be entirely sustained without private subscriptions, and, as the result, the education of the people is to a large and increasing extent given into the charge of the clergy of the Church of England and the priests of the Church of Rome.

Every effort having been made to induce the Government to reconsider a policy which reverses thewhole course of modern legislation, this Conference, believing that the cause of religious freedom is of more importance than any ties of party, appeals to the Nonconformists of Great Britain to declare that they will not accept as a satisfactory representative any candidate for a seat in the House of Commons who will not pledge himself to the amendment of the Education Act, in the sense and to the extent of the propositions adopted by this Conference, and further to make it clearly understood, that except under the pressure of great national exigencies, they will not give any such candidate their support.

Mr. JAMES BOYD (Treasurer of the Manchester Committee): Gentlemen, a few words will put you into the knowledge of our position at the present moment. None of us in Manchester, when we formed the Nonconformist Association on the 21st of February last, had any idea that on this day, the 25th of January, so many of you from all parts of the country were to be brought together, and would have been called to listen to the solemn statement of principles, and would have had the opportunity here of so nobly resolving that in your several localities you will act up to, in practice, those principles adopted to-day, and diffuse them widely all over the land. Well, when we first conceived the calling together of the Conference, it was needful to look where we could get the sinews of war; and I am happy to tell you that at once our noble chairman, Mr. Johnson, put down £100; Mr. Hugh Mason, £100; Mr. Abraham Howarth, £100; another friend, £100;—(a voice: "The Treasurer." Cheers.)—Mr. James Sidebottom, £50; Mr. Thomas Roberts, £50; that is for Manchester, without any canvassing—£500. The good friends at Birmingham, who had helped us to the completion of this Conference, knowing that our expenses were about doubled by the postponement of the Conference from last month till now—it has added to our expenses immensely—they said, "we cannot see you bear all that expense alone, put us down for £100" Then this morning, upstairs,

Mr. Stitt, of Liverpool—unasked—subscribes £100; Sir Titus Salt, £100; our worthy chairman of to-day (Mr. Middlemore) £100; Mr. Chamberlain, £50. Now that our noble Conference may not be without the issue to which it should lead, it is the intention of the committee to send you all a revised copy of the proceedings in a pamphlet form—(applause)—and that will cost £200 or £300 to print. I have read to you the names of subscribers of £950, and we want to see that doubled before you disperse. That is all I have to say.

Rev. C. STOVEL: I think that nothing but the endeared friendship which I feel for your honoured chairman of this morning could have induced me to address you just at this moment, and under so discouraging circumstances. The resolution to which I thought to have said a word or two being passed cannot now be altered, else I did think of suggesting the alteration of one word, putting "citizens" or "Liberal voters" in the place of "Nonconformists." I hold that to be important, and you will consider as you pass to your labours whether it be better to go before the Government in the character of Nonconformists, a party designation, than it would be to put forward your claims as English citizens. (Hear, hear.) I hope that this question has been in substance determined, I think Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., has set it right, and I hope that the matter will work itself quite straight in all the operations of your homes. I come here as representing two thousand churches or thereabouts, and I was charged to ascertain that a clear distinction was made between the civil and religious matter in State education. I think I shall be able to go back and say this, so far as your influence extends, has been fully accomplished. I hope then that you will be kind enough to consider these two points as settled—an entire separation between civil and religious matters in all your State educational processes, and then that you will claim this separation of the Government *as citizens* and *not* as partisans. In order to give greater effect to your measures, I would say, regard the whole of your appeals to the Government for what is civil as a demand made on trustees for the proper execution of their trusts. Now, permit me further to say that if we follow the just application of our principles with such exactness as we may be able to

attain, and lean on God for help in all our efforts to accomplish this great object, we shall soon see the streams of your influence gather strength from rills on every side. As you advance obstacles may disturb the even flow of your beneficence, foam may rise and spray may hang above you and around you, but even this will bear a bow of hope produced by smiles from heaven.

The Conference then adjourned.

THURSDAY EVENING.

RICHARD JOHNSON, ESQ., J.P., of Manchester, in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen of the Conference, as this is the last meeting of the Conference, if you will allow me I will reserve any remarks that I may desire to make until tts close. You will find upon the programme the Registration of Marriages and Burials Bill. The Conference Committee have come to the conclusion that seeing that the very important questions of the Irish Education Bill and the Scotch Education Bill have to be discussed this evening, perhaps it will be well if we submit the resolutions which have been prepared upon the subject of the Burials and Marriages Bill, and if you approve of them, that you should pass them without discussion, in order that we may the earlier proceed to the very important business which lies before us.

Rev. ALEXANDER THOMSON moved—

"That this Conference is of opinion that when the time has come for a complete consolidation and amendment of the marriage laws of the United Kingdom, no amendment can be satisfactory to the Nonconformists which does not provide for the absolute equality of all citizens before the law. (Hear, hear.)

"Further, that in reference to the burial service this Conference claims equal rights for all citizens in the national or parochial Church and burial grounds—(hear, hear)—and while just regard is had to existing vested interests, this Conference protests against any exclusive privileges being accorded to any section of the community in the interment of the dead."

Mr. J. A. BEITH seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

IRISH EDUCATION.

The Rev. G. PAYNE JARVIS, of Limerick, moved—

"That the members of this Conference, while repudiating on the ground of religious principle on their own behalf all grants of public money to sustain denominational educational organisations, cannot recognise any claim of the Roman Catholic Church to obtain support from the State in propagating its religious faith in the schools of Ireland; and must insist that the duty of the State to confine itself entirely and solely to secular instruction should not be departed from in any part of this empire." (Cheers.)

At the commencement of my address on the subject of Irish education, you must permit me to say, that coming, as I do, from a city deservedly held in historical remembrance as the city of the violated treaty, I have the deepest interest in all questions affecting the social and religious welfare of the people among whom I dwell. Living in the midst of the real natives of the country, it is impossible not to admire them for their affectionate character, deep religious devotion, and fervent though misguided patriotism. Even for Fenianism, that sad and fatal delusion from which they have so recently suffered, one is able to find many extenuating circumstances. Those foul pages of the statute book of English legislation disgraced by the indelible infamy of the penal laws, are provocation enough to nerve the native arm to strike the blow which shall for ever rid his country of the hated Saxon invader, and in the culpable conduct of that priesthood who, knowing the altered condition of English sentiment in regard to that country, neglect to assure the Irish people that one sincere and universal cry of "Justice to Ireland" is rising from the lips and hearts of liberty-loving Englishmen, and in the wide dissemination of an interested and seditious Irish press, I see sufficient causes of the increase and perpetuation of Irish hostility. The alienation of the people of Ireland from the government of England is as much their misfortune as their crime.

The subject which is now to be discussed by this Conference is, I conceive, not so much the question of Irish Education in general; but the present aspects of that question in their relation to the dear and cherished Nonconformist principles of civil and religious liberty.

During the proceedings of this Conference a great deal has been said in reference to the conscience of the Catholics of Ireland, and it has, I think, been too much taken for granted that the Catholic conscience is of the same genus as the conscience of English Protestants. Gentlemen, the Catholic conscience is by no means such an intelligible and simple faculty as you are wont to imagine. The Catholic conscience may be described in words which a modern preacher has used to describe the Anglican conscience:—"It is a strangely convoluted conscience with a peculiarly complicated action."

"We will have"—say the Catholic hierarchy—"Catholic education in all its branches, primary, intermediate, and university; that is to say: We demand for you, and you, as Catholic parents, demand for yourselves, the legal right and, as far as it is afforded to others, aid from the State, to discharge your duty of educating your children in accordance with the dictates of your conscience and the teaching of the Catholic Church, of which you are members.

"As to primary education, therefore, we demand, for all schools which are exclusively Catholic, the removal of all restrictions upon religious instruction, so that the fulness of distinctive religious teaching may enter into the course of daily secular education, with full liberty for the use of Catholic books and religious emblems, and for the performance of religious exercises, and that the right be recognised of the lawful pastors of the children in such schools to have access to them, to regulate the whole business of religious instruction in them, and to remove objectionable books, if any. In such schools the teachers, the books, and the inspectors should all be Catholic."

The Catholic conscience is then, you perceive, gentlemen, of a peculiarly elastic and expansive material.

From this demand and from the Catholic clamour against an irreligious and godless education, you might be inclined to imagine—acting on the motto, "where there's smoke there must be fire"—that the national system of Irish Elementary Education is one of the most godless and atheistical systems to be found in the whole world; whereas, it is one of the most religious and godly. The principles of our common Christianity permeate the school books

of the National Board, and in no vested school, and in very few non-vested schools, is the Catholic priest debarred from entering the school at a fixed time, and giving whatever separate or distinctively religious teaching may suit his purpose. If the national system is to any extent godless or irreligious it is not the Parliament of England, but the sulky obstinacy of the priesthood against whose door the crime must lie.

But all this outcry for distinctive religious teaching arises from the peculiarly conscientious Catholic belief, that in every school for Catholics—the surroundings should be distinctively religious—that the teachers should be dressed in a sacred garb to diffuse the odour of peculiar sanctity, that images, pictures, and crucifixes should adorn the walls to lend their sacred influence to the secular instruction, that mental arithmetic should be succeeded by mental prayer, and that as in the schools of the Christian Brothers, every time the clock strikes the hour there should be a cessation of lessons for the space of five minutes, and amid the solemn stillness of the scene every scholar should inwardly repeat a "Hail Mary," or engage otherwise in private devotion. In short, that the great aim of all Elementary Education by the State should be not to train up the children to be useful citizens of the State, but to be obedient children of the Catholic Church.

These extravagant demands are said to be warranted by a very ancient and deeply revered document, by virtue of which all rights in the education of their children have been taken away from the parents and reposed in the Catholic Church. Our Lord's commission to his disciples to "go and teach all nations," is an authority given to the Catholic Church from heaven, a commission which applies not merely to the proclamation of the Gospel; but extends to every species of instruction—secular and religious—there is nothing exempt, not even Granny's Horn Book, or according to Bishop Dorian, even the multiplication table.

It is no use to point out to such men that our Lord could never have intended his apostles to go and teach all nations reading, writing and arithmetic; it is waste of time to remind them that the apostles were to teach "all things," said Jesus, "whatsoever I have commanded you," and that our Lord never instructed them in the elements of secular knowledge; it is useless to tell them

that to affix such an interpretation to μαθητεύσατε is ridiculous and childish; it is enough for them that it is the Church's interpretation, and by virtue thereof the bishops claim, said Bishop Keane, "the absolute, entire and exclusive control without appeal, over every species of education, secular and religious."

Gentlemen, if these proud and arrogant claims were consistent with truth the question of national elementary education for Catholics could be very speedily settled. We could immediately destroy all the national schools, and withdraw all the Government grants and the State, holding the Bible in its hand, and pointing with its finger to this divine and royal commission—Go and teach all nations—could say to the prelates of the Catholic hierarchy, Go, for both England and Christ expects that you will do your duty; but you must do it at your own cost, and can have no subsidy from the public funds.

Ah, but this is where you would altogether fail to satisfy the Catholic conscience; that peculiarly complicated faculty holds that its dictates must be obeyed at the public charge. According to a speech delivered by the Roman Catholic bishop of Galway only three weeks since, it is the duty of the State to rule its subjects in accordance with their religious principles, and to afford them certain facilities in harmony with their creed; thus *e.g.*, as the Catholics believe they can accept no system of education which is not exclusively Catholic and religious, therefore it is the duty of the Government to afford them educational advantages in harmony with such conscientious principles. The elasticity of such a conscience as this, which is common to the Catholics of Ireland, is capable of almost infinite expansion. Strangely constituted and consistent must that Government be which undertakes to nurse its subjects according to the peculiarities of their various consciences. This would be concurrent endowment with a vengeance.

Conscientiousness! Why, if the schools of Ireland were supported out of a school rate imposed upon the basis of the poor rate valuation, what proportion, think you, would the Protestants contribute who constitute one-fifth of the population? I speak advisedly when I say that one-half would come out of Protestant pockets. Call this conscientiousness!

School rates! Do you think they would impose school rates

upon themselves if they could do without? Don't be so simple. At the Catholic meeting for education held last week in Dublin Mr. Heron, the M.P. for Tipperary, is reported to have said—"The only fund which I see available for endowment on a large scale is the surplus expected to arise from the sale of the property of the disestablished Church of Ireland,—a surplus, it is believed, which will exceed seven millions of money." Nonconformist delegates! do you know anything about the disestablishment of the Irish Church?—did you ever lift up your voices against the injutice of that institution?—did you help to swell the hundred majority by which the Irish Church Act was passed? If so, have an eye to that surplus;—remember its allocation depends upon a future House of Commons. Will you consent to allocate that surplus for the purpose of endowing a new system of exclusively Catholic education in Ireland? I know you would not.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard a great deal of late about governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. I ask, Mr. Chairman, did you ever see any of these commendable "Irish ideas." Where are they to be found? Are they to be found in the lobby of the House of Commons—on the platform of Irish agitators—or on the altars of Catholic churches. The so-called Irish ideas upon the subject of denominational education are Catholic ideas; they have their origin not in the native breast, but in Italian brains. Their inspiration is derived not from Heaven, neither from Ireland, the island of the saints, but from Rome. If you have any doubt upon the matter, read the pastoral from which I have already quoted, and your doubts will be removed. I do not speak thus because I wish to speak disrespectfully of the religion of my fellow-citizens; but I do say this, that before yielding to the cry to rule Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas; it is our bounden duty to enquire whether those ideas are genuine and reasonable, or whether they are imported from the Continent from the city of the seven hills.

Mr. Chairman and delegates, the Catholic meeting, held in Marlborough-street Cathedral, Dublin, last week, strange as it may seem to you, was held under a banner on which was emblazoned, "religious equality." The demand for denominational education was by several speakers at that meeting, and previously in the pastoral of the clergy, urged in the name of religious equality. I

will explain how this strangely convoluted Catholic conscience attempted to make out the Catholic case. It was briefly this—The Protestants said the Catholic prelates and other advocates have in the schools of the National Board, schools to which they can send their children in accordance with their conscientious and religious convictions. The Catholics demand equal privileges, that is schools distinctively and exclusively religious and Catholic, for of such only can the Catholics conscientiously approve. And this is what they call "religious equality." Is it, therefore, "religious equality?" Or, if the paupers in an Irish poor-house sit down together to their evening meal of bread and tea, and some take it into their head to say that they would prefer whiskey, as the "tay don't agree with them," and if they demand whiskey of the guardians in the name of "religious equality"—is it therefore "religious equality?" What new doctrine is this which comes to us with the name of religious equality? It seems to us as if it would be a kind of very "unequal equality;" such an equality as we see between the incomes of the Marquis of Westminster and Paddy the Piper—that is no equality at all. It is the "religious equality," which in every age has favoured one religious sect to the prejudice of others. The "equality" under which the goods and chattels of Nonconformists have been sold in the market-place in order to meet the demands of the Church-rate collector. The demand for denominational education is not a demand for religious equality at all. It is a claim for religious supremacy.

The noble resolutions which you have already passed at this Conference, demanding a literary education at the hands of the State—leaving religious instruction to voluntary effort—offer the most effectual answer to the demands of the Catholic Hierarchy which has anywhere been given. As for those politicians who would grant denominational education in England, but deny it to the sister country—because, forsooth, consistency and logic have no place in politics; why, we may leave them to the tender mercies of our opponents to deal with them as may suit them best. For ourselves we have no idea that we shall carry dismay into the ranks of our Catholic foes; they have too many allies as yet on this side the water to make them dream of surrendering their enterprise, even though defeated in their present contest. They

have not changed their front as we have done. They have but developed their forces all along the line of battle. And they will continue to do so for some time to come. They threaten us with a new alliance of Home Rulers and Denominationalists. They threaten to disturb the peace of Ireland (unless concessions are made them), through the length and breadth of the land. Like unruly children they hope to gain their end by crying loud. One most serious mistake made by our present Premier in connection with the Act for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, was the hint that it was intended in some measure to pacify the passionate spirit of Fenianism. Ireland must be governed by recognised principles. Supposing that we do behold a combination of the priests and people to convulse the whole country unless the Government concede their demands, it will, alas! be nothing new. Chronic disaffection, unfortunately, is the normal condition of Catholic Ireland. It is a suicidal policy; it has ruined the country. Agitate as they may, agitation will injure none but themselves. The waters of the broad Atlantic agitated by the stormy wind and tempest roll in upon the rock-bound coast of Ireland, and dashing themselves, with loud and angry roar, at the base of her lofty cliffs, exhaust themselves, and falling back, break in spray and foam; and so this Catholic agitation may dash itself against the firm and steadfast rock of civil and religious liberty, but shall recoil upon itself, wasted, weak, and spent with excitement. With principles, and not with consequences, we have all along held we have alone to do. The principles belong to us to see and follow; the threatened consequences belong to God and to the Government.

Whether Mr. Gladstone, whose cabinet seems in a most rampageous condition on this old Irish difficulty, will venture to legislate in accordance with the demands of the Catholic hierarchy perhaps a few days will disclose. The Catholics believe he will. They count upon 36 Catholic members banding themselves together to obtain these Catholic concessions, and reckon upon obtaining the votes of many Anglican Conservatives. We have given promises in this Conference that we also shall band ourselves together to promote those principles which affect not merely ourselves as Nonconformists, but all the citizens of this vast empire. Whatever

Government, therefore, shall be in power, we will give them neither vote nor aid in any measure which infringes our ancestral and dearly cherished principles of civil and religious liberty.

Mr. R. W. DALE: I wish to give notice of a motion that I intend to move after the Scotch and Irish question is closed. The reasons will be sufficiently apparent to any one who has read an article in the *Times* this morning, interpreting the withdrawing of certain words that appeared in brackets in a resolution of last night. I will read the resolution that I propose to move, in order that every member of the Conference may have a fair opportunity of discussing it:

"That in the event of a school-board permitting religious communities to provide at their own cost for the giving of religious instruction out of school hours in buildings provided by the board,—a proposal on which the Conference pronounces no opinion—this Conference desires to declare that in no case should the schoolmaster be employed to give that instruction."

The Rev. J. ORR, of Comber: Mr. Chairman, Christian friends, I appear here to-night as a delegate from Ireland, but not as a Nonconformist, inasmuch as, thanks to Mr. Gladstone, Nonconformity does not exist in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) I may say, that my principal interest in this Conference arises from the consideration that what you do here will be influential elsewhere, and I believe will go far to determine the course of legislation with regard to education in Ireland. Sir, I take it as an initial principle, that if you are satisfied with the denominational system here, you cannot refuse to extend it to Scotland and to extend it to Ireland. (Hear, hear.) And its extension to Ireland implies neither more nor less than this, the handing over of the education of the youth of the land into the hands of the Catholic priesthood. (Hear, hear.) Now, Sir, I suppose you are all tolerably well aware that we have a satisfactory system of education established in Ireland. However, I should be misleading you if I did not say that this system of education is based not upon the secular principle, but rather upon the non-sectarian principle. Its primal aim, as expounded by Mr. Stanley in his celebrated letter, in the year 1831, is to administer united secular and separate religious instruction. But we are now discovering that the admission

of the religious element at all has been unsatisfactory, because, as the previous speaker has said, the denominations in Ireland have, in consequence, come very much to assume the attitude of the Kilkenny cats, and the business of education has been made a subject of continual acrimony originating in the contests and competitions of the various religious bodies. The various denominations thus acquired a right to interfere in the matter of education, and their interference has generally gone, not in the direction of largeness and liberality, but in the direction of narrowness and sectarianism. The consequence is, I believe, that the best men, the most intelligent men of Ireland, are now prepared to say that the only logical and consistent principle that can be affirmed is that the money contributed by the State shall in no case be applied to the teaching of religion. You have heard from the newspapers and from previous speakers at this Conference, of the large demands made by Cardinal Cullen and the Romish hierarchy. Why, sir, the demands amount to nothing less than this: that they should have the absolute and irresponsible control of almost the whole education of the youth of Ireland; that Catholic emblems should be exhibited in the schools; that Catholic books should alone be used; that Catholic teachers, appointed and certificated by the bishops, should alone be employed, and that Catholic supervision should alone be recognised. In fact, as it has been often said in Ireland, the only business of the State in the matter of education, if the Catholic demands are conceded, will be that it will be allowed to supply the money. I wish to draw the attention of the Conference to one point, and it is this—that in the manifesto of principles put forward by the Catholic hierarchy a few years ago (1866) they based their demand precisely upon the existence of a denominational system in this land. They say that a system that is good for England or Scotland should be certainly good for Ireland. Consider for one moment what would be the result of the establishment of a denominational system of education in Ireland. One great aim of the Liberals in that land is this: we are anxious that the children of all churches should grow up together, that they might cherish kindly and Christian feelings one to another. Hatred and sectarianism, sir, have been the curse of our land, and if you adopt a denominational system this

hatred and sectarianism will be intensified more and more. Another point is this. In Ireland there are a very large number of districts where the Protestant population are in a small minority, four or five or six Protestant children attending the national schools. If, then, you establish a denominational system these children must either consent to be debarred from every opportunity of education, or else they must consent to be absorbed in the religion of the dominant establishment. And there is another point to which I wish to call attention. There is a system of education at present administered in Ireland, through the agency of a Catholic fraternity, called the "Christian Brothers;" what is the character of the education given in their schools? The books alone in use are of course thoroughly pervaded with Catholic ideas. They exhibit such interpretations of history as those referred to by Mr. Crosskey last night. But more than this, they are penetrated through and through by a sentiment of direct hostility to this land. My time being almost exhausted, I shall refer only to one other matter. If you recognise the Catholic claims in Ireland, you will be doing for Ireland what no Catholic country is willing to consent to at the instance of the Catholic hierarchy. The Catholic Bishop of Belfast, in the course of an examination recently conducted was asked this question: "Have the claims you have made with regard to education in Ireland been conceded in any land?" And what was the answer: "They have." "Where?" "In England." Nowhere but in England. In Austria, in Southern Germany, in Spain, in Italy, the demands made by our hierarchy have not been allowed, even by a Catholic people. I sympathise with you thoroughly in your present crusade. I wish you all success, and, not only so, I augur for you all success, and for this reason, that I have not the slightest idea that the Liberal party of this land, with Mr. Gladstone at its head, will consent to hand over the whole education of Ireland to the control of the Catholic priesthood. (Cheers.) I beg to second the motion.

Rev. J. C. STREET (of Belfast): Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I am very glad I am not an Irishman, after the description which has been given of that interesting race by the gentleman who opened the discussion to-night. I am here, nevertheless, as a

representative from Ireland, and I have come to express one or two thoughts which are growing into strength, at all events in the north of Ireland, in regard to this education question. Now, I am not going to say one word of abuse of the Roman Catholic prelates, or of the demand which those ecclesiastics have made. Were I a Roman Catholic, and had I watched as they have watched the course of legislation in this country, and did I form as they form a part of the same nation, I should unite with them in demanding that what had been conceded for England, and what was being asked for Scotland, should not be denied to Ireland. (Cheers.) Now, I contend, that the faltering, the uncertain, and the hesitating policy which was pursued at an early period in the education controversy in this country, has landed us in our present awkward difficulties. We troubled ourselves about the word "unsectarian" until it became sickening to us. We could not define it, nobody could define it; and when we were brought face to face with those who said, "Would you put the Bible out of the school?" an enormous amount of opposition was aroused against our cry of unsectarianism, and the world said we were atheists and infidels. A gentleman asks me "if you have conceded in this country denominationalism, and if you are prepared to concede denominationalism in Scotland, would it not be right to concede the same thing to Ireland?" Certainly, if it was right to concede it in England and Scotland; but as it was wrong to do it there it would be wrong to do it in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) But the only way to settle the matter upon an equitable basis is either to apply to Ireland the policy which you have applied to England, or to undo your policy in England—(cheers)—and lay down some broad and general principle, which, because it is just, will apply equally to England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. (Hear, hear.) Well, now, we think that this Nonconformist Conference has laid down at length a programme which will accomplish this result. Personally permit me to express my thanks to the great organisation, the National Education League, for its altered programme. Its first programme was not applicable to the whole empire; its new programme, it seems to me, will solve the problem, and is just as fairly applicable to all the incidents of Irish education, as it is applicable to the incidents of English education.

We contended in England some time ago, some of us, at all events, for a system of secular education, and there are a few, and only a few—I would have you gravely to remember that—across the water raising that same cry now. Many Nonconformists in England, during the agitation, said that they would not drive the Bible out of the schools. The Nonconformists, or those who were Nonconformists—Professor Orr tells us there are none there now—the Nonconformists of Ireland say now that they will not drive the Bible out of the schools. I answer, if they do not they are perpetuating, in Ireland, denominational education. Now, sir, nobody will venture to say, after such an assembly as has been held in Manchester this week, that the Nonconformists of Great Britain are a godless people. The works they have done for the advancement of true religion, stamp them as men who have given full proof of their ministry, and full proof of their earnest lives, and if they truthfully dare to adopt the programme of secular education, it seems to me they will help us on the other side of the water to get rid of a great bugbear, and lay down fundamental principles which will apply to all alike. (Cheers.) It seems to me that that singularly convoluted conscience, of which the gentleman spoke who introduced this discussion, is to be found just as much on this side of the water as on that, for the moment you say, as you have been saying this week, that you will apply the principle of secular education, you will find all the clergy of the Established Church of this empire, and a considerable number of other clergy, raising their hands in holy horror, and saying that you are trying to bring atheism into the community. That cry will be raised in Ireland; but when it is seen, as it will be seen by-and-by, that you are determined rigidly to apply this rule,—that those funds which are contributed by the entire State shall be used only for purposes in which all the members of the state are agreed, that moment, though Roman Catholic prelates in Ireland, and Anglican prelates here may howl "Atheism" in your ears, that principle will be seen to cover the entire ground, and we shall at least see our way to a final conclusion of this controversy. I do not think the conclusion is to come very soon. I do not think, despite the greatness of this meeting and the mightiness which it represents, that our battle is soon to be at an end. It seems to

me that year after year may pass by and our earnest and arduous efforts may be used to the full extent, but not until we have to a man banded ourselves together in our separate constituencies, not until we have dared in all our pulpits to proclaim secular education as the only right principle, not until we have been bold anywhere and everywhere to maintain this as the true principle of education, shall we see our way to the final result of this conflict. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, carry out your Nonconformist programme as defined this week; carry out the programme of the National Education League, and you will dispose of this bugbear of the Roman Catholic prelates in Ireland, and of this other great if not greater bugbear of the Anglican prelates here. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution was put and unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. HENRY RENTON: I have been invited, and I esteem it no small honour and privilege, and yet no small responsibility, to take a public part in this Conference—an assembly of the living representatives of all those sections of the English nation, by whom, for five centuries, under the successive designations of Wycliffites, Puritans, Nonconformists, Methodists and Protestant-Dissenters, with ever increasing numbers and success, the struggle has been maintained against the domination and evils of a State Church, and man's most sacred interests; religious truth and liberty, have been upheld and secured, and, through these mightiest elements, Britain's internal strength and foreign influence have been so augmented, that from the position of a third-rate power, under an intolerant hierarchy and a tyranical dynasty, she has risen to the foremost place among the nations in moral, commercial, and political influence, under a constitutional monarchy the freest, the mildest, and the most popular the world has ever seen—such a representative assembly, I say, no man of intelligence, who prizes above all rights the rights of conscience, can behold, much less confront, without profound interest and profound reverence. Yet, coming from the land of Knox, who made a more thorough overthrow of Popery than your English Reformers, from the land of the Covenanters, who fought no less valiantly and suffered no less cruelly in the cause of religious freedom than your Puritans, withstanding to the uttermost any submission or sanction to the imposition by the State of a form of worship or Church government to

which their consciences were opposed; from the land of the seceders, who would not remain in a Church which tolerated doctrine opposed to its confession, or the neglect of discipline, or the subversion of the rights of its members; and, once more, from the land of the voluntaries, who in recent times first formulated the positions, and organised the societies, against State Church Establishments, as institutions whose abolition was to be sought for the highest advantage of religion and of the Commonwealth: who largely brought about the growth birth and addition to the family of Nonconformist Churches of that youngest and most thriving and vigorous section, the Free Church of Scotland, which, though making rapider progress in voluntaryism than did any of her seniors at her age, has not yet completed that branch of her education; and who all now regard as their head-quarters your noble Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control; coming from a land with such ancestry, coming personally with the long cherished sentiment, "*Sit anima mea cum Puritanis Anglicanis*," coming, too, after many years adoption and advocacy of the principles which at this Conference you have unanimously affirmed; and coming under the shadow of a domestic bereavement to fulfil the duty I had undertaken of speaking on a matter of such moment to your main business and purpose, permit me to bespeak your indulgence if I should trespass on your time.

The subject assigned to me is the Scotch Education Bill. You are all aware that a national system of education has long existed in Scotland, and perhaps a very brief sketch of its history and present position may be needful or suitable to introduce the views and conclusions which I have earnestly to submit. John Knox was not more distinguished for his evangelism and intrepidity as a reformer than for his sagacity, far-sightedness, and boldness as a politician. In that age, when educational institutions were associated with the ecclesiastical, and the right of the State to provide and fashion both was not disputed, the end which, next to a reformed church throughout the land, Knox sought, was a national system of education. In 1560, the same year that Popery was abolished, he submitted a most comprehensive and complete scheme, which was approved by the General Assembly, that in every rural parish there should be a

school to teach reading and the catechism; that in every town there should be a school to teach grammar and Latin; that in every considerable town there should be a college to teach, besides Latin, rhetoric, and Greek; and, lastly, that there should be several universities to teach the sciences of divinity, law, and medicine. The objects of the scheme were that no peasant's child should be left without good elementary instruction, no child in or near a town without the opportunity of instruction in grammar and Latin, and no child of parts and predilections without facilities for mastering all the branches requisite to enter the universities; and that at these the students should be thoroughly trained for the learned professions till they were 24 years of age, when each should be capable of serving the Church or the Commonwealth as minister, lawyer, or physician. Of this magnificent plan of primary and intermediate schools, to which nothing similar had then been projected in any other country, or was attempted for many generations after, the only portion subsequently carried out was the establishment of a national school in every parish, which continues to this day. Of these schools there are two classes, parochial and burgh; the latter denoting those in burghs, each of which has one, sometimes a common, sometimes a grammar or other school which is erected, upheld, and managed by the Town Council; the former, those in country parishes, in each of which only one is imperative, but more are permissive—the school-house and house for the teacher, with a fixed salary for him, being provided by a rate on the valued rent of lands, in addition to which he has also the school fees. Of these latter, the parochial or properly national schools of Scotland, the election of teacher, the amount of his salary within a prescribed minimum and maximum, the appointment of the branches to be taught, and the management of the school, are left in every parish to the heritors and established minister. These heritors consist of proprietors of land above a certain valued rent, and in most parishes they are very few in number; in many parishes there is only one, and of the larger proprietors it is very rare that any ever attend a heritors' meeting, their functions being performed by factors or agents, who in most cases have no personal connection with the parish, so that the influence of the established minister, who is often the only

resident member of the managing body, is necessarily great, and not seldom paramount.

These schools did great service for several generations; but their value and influence have long been very circumscribed, and the language in which a certain class of speakers and writers are wont to indulge, that Scotland owes to them her religion, her intelligence, and her greatness is the fancy picture of imagination and partizanship. For a long time past these schools have sufficed for only about a fourth part of the children attending elementary schools in the country districts, and only about a fifth part of those attending such schools in Scotland at large, without taking into account the thousands of children attending higher class schools. According to the report of the Education Commissioners there are 92,000 children going without education who ought to be at school, a number exceeding by several thousands all those on the roll of the parish schools. This statement has strongly impressed on the public mind the inadequacy of the existing provisions for elementary education, and has strengthened the demand which was raised 25 years ago, and has continued with ever augmenting force, for an amended and an extended system of national education. The faults of the present system are many and glaring. The management of the parochial school is committed, as we have seen, to a body, of which the most influential, in many cases the only resident, and frequently the only acting member, is the parish minister, who holds this invidious place merely *ex-officio*, and who is also the only man in the parish who is expressly exempted from the school rates. Of the rates levied on the landowners they have the right to devolve one-half upon their tenants; but neither the tenants, who pay this moiety, nor other inhabitants of the parish, for the benefit of whose children the school is provided, and by whom also all the school fees are paid, have any representation whatever at the Board, to which is committed all the powers of electing the teacher, of allocating his salary, of appointing the branches to be taught, and of fixing the school fees. Then the appointment of the teacher is for life, which has conduced more than any other cause to the remissness and inefficiency that have characterised a large portion of the occupants of that office, and to the unspeak-

able loss of the children committed to their care. We hear often of the good the parochial schools have done. If, of those who take honours at the universities, some had got all their early training at a parish school, they are blazoned as specimens of what the system produces. But we hear little of the evil they have inflicted on tens of thousands who could not redress or tell their wrongs. Think of a school in a rural parish under an inefficient teacher for 30 or 40 years as the only local seminary accessible to the population, from which the successive groups of children, and after four or five years attendance, come forth to enter on a life of toil, without having so learned to read, or to write, or to count, as to perform any of these exercises with ease or with pleasure, and, through the detriment and obstruction they have sustained thereby, have been debarred from the progress and prosperity, and position they might otherwise have attained, and astricted to a condition of ignorance and drudgery for life. According to the statistics for the five years from 1860 to 1864 inclusive, the average of scholars who went from the parish schools to the universities was less than a quarter per cent, or only one in 464. But it is not to furnish a scholar for the university out of every 464 that these schools are provided, but to give a thorough training in the elementary branches to the other 463, that they may have a solid groundwork for all the subsequent stages of education. What is needed and demanded is, that for the present close system of management a popular constitution be substituted, transferring all the powers now vested in the heritors to a local board freely chosen by the ratepayers or householders. To this change three parties are opposed,—the first, a large body of the heritors, because they are to be deprived of their exclusive powers, though these have been for the most part exercised carelessly and only by delegation; the second, the established clergy, because both their powers and their invidious position are to be swept away; and the third, the parochial teachers, because they dislike and dread popular control. With security for the eligibility of only properly qualified teachers, and for the efficient inspection of the schools, are required both greater stimulus to the diligence and fidelity of the teachers and greater facility for the removal of the inefficient and the delinquent. These im-

portant reforms, for which the United Presbyterian Church has contended for 25 years, are provided under the Bill which the Lord Advocate has announced his purpose to re-introduce in the ensuing session of Parliament, a Bill, in several respects, the most advanced that has been brought forward by Government. It contains other provisions, against which, as well as against these, clamour and opposition are raised by the opponents of reform and innovation. But omitting notice of such as being only of local bearing, or not involving general principles, I must not intrude on your attention, let me say that of all grounds of controversy and of opposition raised by the Bill, the chief is its mode of dealing with the religious difficulty. That mode is unhappily the repetition of the vain attempt, where a principle of justice, of religion, of conscience is at stake, to evade a direct and honest issue, and arrest the conflict and silence the controversy by a compromise, with a semblance of concession to both sides. It is a remarkable fact that in the first Act of 1696 for establishing a school in every parish, Bible, or Catechism, or religious instruction, or religion, is not mentioned or referred to, nor was any test required of schoolmasters. That continued till 1803, in which year an Act was passed which empowered Presbyteries, when a schoolmaster was elected, "to take trial of his sufficiency for the office in respect of morality and religion and of such branches of literature as by the majority of heritors and minister shall be deemed most necessary and important for the parish;" and required "that they shall see him sign the Confession of Faith." They were also constituted the courts to judge in all complaints against the schoolmaster, and to censure, suspend, or depose him. That was the Act which imposed the test and placed the schools wholly under the control of the Established Church. In 1861 that test was abolished, but, instead of opening the office of teacher to all qualified competitors, a solemn declaration was substituted, which, admitting Free Churchmen and all who held the principle of an Established Church, and the doctrines of the Scotch Church, excluded all voluntaries, and all who differ from the distinguishing doctrines of the Shorter Catechism. Its terms are, "that in the discharge of the said office, I will never endeavour, directly or indirectly, to teach or inculcate any opinions opposed to the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, or

to the doctrine contained in the Shorter Catechism, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1648, and that I will faithfully conform thereto in my teaching of the said school, and that I will not exercise the functions of the said office to the prejudice or subversion of the Church of Scotland as by law established, or the doctrine or privileges thereof," so that the total repeal of the test yet remains to be accomplished. Under both of the Acts of 1803 and 1861 there is undoubtedly involved power and provision for teaching the Shorter Catechism as an ordinary branch of instruction in these schools, as previous to them was the use and wont under the undefined but wide powers of the heritors and minister. That usage obtained when the adherents of the Established Church were almost co-extensive with the population, and when, except a few Roman Catholics in remote and ignorant Highland districts, and a small body of Episcopalians who had a special Act of Toleration, there were no Dissenters in Scotland. The views and habits which obtained in that state of things have come down to the present time, and many think, and talk, and argue, as if Scotland had still a separate legislature—as if Dissenters, when numerous and powerful, might be ignored, disregarded, or over-ridden as easily as when they were few, and as if there were no interests, parties, or principles in England or in Ireland, to be taken into account by an Imperial Parliament in legislating for Scotland. What public opinion has been lately evoked on the subject in speeches and resolutions has been mainly that of presbyteries and teachers; and judging from it, the current has been strong for obtaining in the new Bill some statutory provision for religious instruction. One presbytery, on the 10th of this month, adopted the following resolutions, of which I give the abridgment:—"That religion shall be taught in all national schools;"—"That as the Shorter Catechism is one of the standards of the Reformed Church of Scotland, and contains doctrines held by the vast majority of the people of Scotland, its teaching shall be enacted with the teaching of the Bible, and that the teaching of it cannot be regarded as intolerant when the rights of the minority are protected by a conscience clause;"—"That as the nation is avowedly

Protestant in its constitution, it is absurd to say that if the nation maintains its teaching, as interpreted by a Protestant symbol, in Scotland, it is therefore under obligations to maintain the teaching of Popery, under the control of the Popish priesthood, in Ireland;" —"That to secure properly qualified teachers they shall be trained to give religious as well as secular instruction." Now, this is the Old Light doctrine in Scotland, and I honour it as undisguised, straightforward, and consistent. The principle of a State religion is carried out in education. Its doctrine is to be taught at the expense of the whole community, and dissentients, whether scores or millions, are to be granted the toleration of absenting themselves from its teachings. A religious test is to be re-imposed for the teachers, and they are to be an ecclesiastical and not a secular body. Other and numerous presbyteries, avoiding as impolitic and inexpedient such direct and bold expression, seek to compass the same ends, as far as possible, by less startling and more specious proposals,—as, that the education in the schools shall be "according to the use and wont,"—which means something called religious instruction, but a thing very variable in quality and quantity, from that which imparts no knowledge of any doctrine of revelation to that which imparts a respectable acquaintance with the Shorter Catechism,—and, as most plausible of all, that the branches to be taught shall be left to the local boards, in 90 per cent of which Presbyterians will have the sway; so that, without specifying doctrines or formularies, all that is sought in the bolder resolutions, or in the indefinite and suspicious "use and wont," can be as well secured as if specifically enacted in the statute. If the Press is to be taken as the exponent of public opinion, it will not be found greatly in favour of including doctrinal instruction in the branches to be provided in national schools, while its most powerful and widely circulated organs strongly support a strictly secular system. If the opinion of the religious denominations is to be taken, the Roman Catholics, the Episcopalians, and a variety of minor bodies among Protestant Dissenters, are opposed to the doctrines of the Shorter Catechism, while others who are not, and the United Presbyterians, who firmly hold these doctrines, deny the right of Parliament to provide for the teaching of them. These are the circumstances in which the Lord-Advocate, while truly appreciating

the value of religious instruction, and clearly indicating his own judgment that a national system should include only the secular branches, yet proposes to give School Boards such powers that they may provide in the schools what religious instruction they see fit. He objects to insert a word in the Act "prescribing" religious instruction, and expects thereby to conciliate those who oppose such prescription. But he gives such powers to the local boards that they may prescribe it, and he expects thereby to conciliate those who desire that it shall be furnished in the same way and by the same authority as the secular branches; and the ground on which he defends this course is "deference to the prevailing opinion of the people of Scotland." But is that ground which is so courteous, and seems so commendable, solid or honourable or tenable? Only if the opinion deferred to does not involve injustice, or, what is worse, invasion of the rights of conscience. These are wrongs to which an upright legislator will not defer; and if this or other flagrant wrongs are involved in any scheme for which a people clamour, is the British Parliament to sanction them and decree unrighteous decrees? If this ground is good for the Lord-Advocate, it is equally good for the Irish Secretary; and the Education Scheme of the Romish hierarchy, or the Home Rule Scheme of the Irish Fenians may be introduced by the representative of the Government on the pretext of the prevailing opinion among the people of Ireland. The imperial legislature cannot denude itself of the responsibility attaching to every Act it passes. It has the prevailing opinion of the people of England and of Ireland to consider as well as that of Scotland. In all measures for Scotland which pretend to have any principle for their basis, and in legislating for the same ends in the three kingdoms, there ought to be the same principles, and as much as possible the like machinery.

Under the false issues and misrepresentations set before the people, their difficulty is summed up in the question—If the public schools shall be provided and authorised to teach only the secular branches, are the children to be left without religious instruction? I answer, that by Parliament they *ought* to be so left; but I ask in return, if the public schools are to provide only the secular branches of education, are the children *to*

be left without food, without clothes, without beds? The one question is quite as frightful and quite as reasonable as the other. Not providing religious instruction in the public schools does not hinder any child in these schools from getting that instruction every day before or after the hours of these schools; does not hinder parents from uniting together to employ any teacher they please for that purpose, it may be the same who teaches the secular branches; does not hinder any minister, or congregation, or association of ministers or congregations, in the same town or district, to concert what measures they shall judge fit for fulfilling this great trust and responsibility. Will Christian parents say—will Christian ministers say—will Christian churches say—if Parliament does not teach their children the fear of the Lord, they will grow up without it? Or, will they say that if Parliament shall teach the poor neglected children of worthless parents to read, they will not offer and supply religious instruction to them? It has been for years my professed conviction that dependence on common schools for the religious instruction of children has been one of the greatest hindrances to its proper obtainment—one of the greatest promotives of their indifference and aversion to it—as the most unattractive portion of school routine, from the way in which it has generally been taught, and one of the greatest reproaches to Christian parents and to Christian churches, as at once a curse and a consequence of their delegation and transference to a foreign party of a trust and a privilege which in their respective relations they have no right to delegate or transfer; and most certainly there is no portion of the United Kingdom, and no people in the habitable world, in which the religious instruction of the children may be left with less difficulty or more absolute confidence to the single trust of the parents and of the churches than in Scotland. To us, Nonconformists, the two most sacred interests of our earthly existence are involved in this controversy—religion and liberty. But of these religion is first. Ours is a religion of light, love, and holiness. Its basis is Divine Truth—the Word of God. That Truth is to be imparted, not in an obscured, mutilated, reserved form; but in the clearest, fullest, and most earnest manner that the best instructed teacher can convey it to child or adult, for the very

purpose that it may guide the understanding, move the heart, and control the will, and so mould the character, and pervade the life of the recipient. But such is not the religious instruction which Parliament will attempt or sanction in national schools designed equally for children of all denominations. What Parliament has decided on in England is that no catechism or formulary of any denomination shall be taught in these schools, as if by this exclusion no controverted doctrine could or would be taught. But there is not a single distinctive doctrine of Christianity which is not controverted by some denomination, so that a suppression of all teaching of controverted doctrines, if that were possible, would also be the suppression of the teaching of all Christian doctrines. For the sacred and supreme interests of religion its teaching must be absolutely free, there must be no restraint on the utterances of the man who imparts it from the depths of conviction and of the heart. But such teaching is not possible under a State system. In Scotland, unfortunately, the question is viewed by a large number in a narrow and selfish spirit, without regard to its relations to the questions of English and Irish education, and even with the desire to have it kept apart from them, as if it were something local and far different, to be dealt with on other principles and for other ends. This is an error and danger which demand the vigilance of the guardians of religious liberty in England and in Ireland, not less than of those in Scotland, to take care that in no measure dealing with the education of the people, shall any principle or provision be sanctioned henceforth, which trenches on the rights of conscience. It has been announced by the Lord Advocate and other members of the Government, including the Premier himself, that after the Ballot Bill, the Scotch Education Bill will be the second important measure brought forward in the approaching session; and I implore this Conference to consider, that, on the principles and provisions of that measure, will depend the character of the subsequent legislation for England and for Ireland; so that if the question of Scotch education was never of deeper interest and moment to the people of Scotland than at present, it was never before of so great interest and moment to the Nonconformists of England and the Protestants of Ireland Then will take place the first battle on that great principle

which is henceforth to engage supreme attention in this country, and the precious opportunity will be furnished of preventing under the Scotch Act the evils which you have found so grievous under the English and of securing under it as far as education is concerned, that separation of religion from all State provision and control, which you desire as essential alike to the free, unfettered, true, and earnest teaching of religion, and to the investment of every subject of the State with complete religious liberty—an opportunity, I earnestly submit, which you cannot neglect without irreparable detriment to your own cause, and which you cannot seize successfully, or even resolutely, without an earnest of its triumph. I beg to submit the resolution :—

"That the principle affirmed in the previous resolutions of the Conference ought to guide the educational policy of the Government in all parts of the United Kingdom; and that determined opposition should be offered to the first educational measure by which they are again violated; that, when the Scotch Education Bill is brought before the House of Commons, the members of this Conference will employ their earnest efforts to assist their friends in Scotland in securing that it shall contain no provision which will promote religious teaching at the public expense, or give support to denominational schools."

Mr. GEORGE HOPE (Fenton Barns): I rise to second the resolution. As a Scotchman, I have great pleasure in saying a few words in an assembly composed mainly of representatives of English Nonconformity. I assure you it has been with the deepest interest that I have listened to the able speeches delivered at this Conference, speeches not more distinguished for their eloquence than for their firm grip of what I consider sound principles. I confess I was somewhat disappointed, in 1870, when the Education Bill was allowed to pass in comparative quietness; but after hearing these speeches I have great hope that we shall speedily recover lost ground. As I understand the matter, we are all at one in our desire for a really national system of compulsory secular education, with all reasonable opportunity for separate religious instruction. Of course we wish secular education given in a religious spirit; and surely the common sense of the different School Boards will lead to the selection of teachers—who may be found I think in every denomination—who are capable

of infusing into the youth under their charge the love of uprightness and honesty, purity and goodness, loyalty to conscience; and I may go further, and say they may be imbued with the love of God and man, without trenching on the peculiarities of any sect whatever. But some insist on theological teaching, and here the difficulty begins. They won't see the difference, which appears to me to be great, between religious and theological teaching. In the parish schools of Scotland, which, whatever may be their occasional shortcomings, have had a most beneficial influence on the characracter of the Scottish people, the Bible is read daily, and the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines is taught to almost all the pupils. There are some people, notably the clergy of the Established Church, who insist that the good effects of those schools have arisen, not from the pupils having been well taught the three R's, but from their having learned by rote their catechism. (Laughter.) That may be—provided that teaching children to repeat what they cannot understand can possibly have such an effect. But be that as it may, I maintain it is the duty of parents themselves to teach their children the theology they approve of, and surely they would not invoke in vain the aid, at stated times, of their ministers or clergymen, if this half teaching in schools which satisfies their consciences at present were abolished. Besides I hold it to be a usurpation of power by the State to tax me or any one in order to teach others a theology which we do not believe. If it is almost unbearable that a State should do this directly, it is still worse to hand over such a power to the chance majority of a parish educational board. I say it is the duty of the State to see that all children are well grounded in elementary education. This will give them habits of attention and aid the development of their intellectual powers, and thus fit them for the discharge of their duties as citizens of the State. If this can be successfully accomplished, I am strongly of opinion that it will at least go a long way to fit them for the eternal hereafter. I do not know whether the Scotch Education Bill or the amendments you desiderate in the English Bill will be first introduced into Parliament. If the Scotch Bill comes first, and if we can by your aid obtain a complete separation of the secular from the religious theological education, it will render the attainment of the

proposed amendments on your Bill comparatively easy. There is not a single town in Scotland represented by a Tory—(cheers)—and I believe the majority of electors are Dissenters. They have only to make the proper representations to their members, which I am sure they will do if they have not done so already, in order to insure their assistance on this important question. (Hear, hear.) Let us, then, whatever measure comes first, do our best to excite a long, loud and successful palaver in the Houses of Parliament so as to save every parish in Scotland from similar speeches and theological disputes as I see from the newspapers you have been for some time afflicted in England. (Cheers.) If only true to ourselves success is inevitable.

The CHAIRMAN: Permit to say that there is no man in Scotland who has fought the fight of Liberalism and free-trade as Mr. Hope has done. We owe more to Mr. Hope than to any man in Scotland. (Cheers.)

The Rev. JOHN GORDON: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen—I rise, not for the purpose of saying a single word on the general principles which are involved in the motion I have to support. You understand those principles as well as I do; you have the same attachment to them as I have; and you are now as earnest in their support as anything which I could say would lead you to be. I rise for the simple purpose of calling attention to a practical matter involved in the resolution; and in order to avoid the possibility of making a speech, I will confine myself to the mere relation of the circumstances which have brought me upon my legs to-night. I received a few days ago a letter from a gentleman in Edinburgh, than whom there is not a more influential man in Scotland, and than whom there is not a man who has done more for the education of the people of Scotland. I refer to Mr. Smith, Vice-president of the Philosophical Institution. (Hear, hear.) The purport of his letter was this—that it was understood in Edinburgh that the Government of the country were about to bring forward the Scotch Education Bill at an early part of the next session, in such a manner as might secure that a vote should be taken upon it before they would consider the Nonconformist objections to the present Education Act, or proceed to the settlement of the Education question in Ireland. They

depend, as it is supposed, upon the religious feeling of the people of Scotland to get a favourable expression of opinion in relation to that bill at the first, and so to obtain a leverage by which they may secure a greater advantage than they could otherwise gain in connection with the English Opposition and the Irish difficulties. Now, sir, the principle of the Scotch Education Bill, as proposed by the Lord Advocate—the principle with which we have to deal —is simply this, that without prescribing religious teaching it permits the School Board of a parish to adopt what religious teaching it pleases. The religious teaching in the Scotch National Schools at present is not of an intense character at all. Whatever power may be possessed, that power is very liberally administered. But if an active religious body in any parish takes into its hands the direction of the religious instruction of that parish, the religious element will be strengthened, and be made to bear with more oppressive effect upon those who differ from the opinions taught than the present system either does bear or can be brought to bear. Now, gentlemen, I have to urge upon you what the letter to which I have referred has entrusted to my hands to lay before this Conference. The advice there given is to this effect: that whatever measure involving the principle of religious teaching in connection with national education is first proposed, should be resisted by all the opposition which the Nonconformist body can give against it. (Loud cheers.) In this matter we should not act as Englishmen only, or as Scotchmen only, or as Irishmen only; but that, setting aside all separate and party interests, as well as all interests connected with our denominational positions, we should honestly, faithfully and earnestly apply the principle on which we profess to act to all the circumstances with which we have nationally to do. (Cheers.) And there is danger, Mr. Chairman, that we should not act upon one principle in this instance. There is danger that if the Government attempt to do what I have described, the English Nonconformist fervour and enthusiasm will not be applied to the resistance of a Scotch Education Bill with the same direct and powerful opposition as would be applied to an English bill possessing the same character and aiming to accomplish the same object. Now let us set aside all considerations but the consideration of principle, and direct ourselves to this, that

the Government shall not play upon us this trick or any trick of the kind, and that when they introduce in any form, Irish or English, or Scotch, the principle of religious teaching in connection with national education, we will resist it as though it applied to our own country, or our own particular homes. (Hear, hear.) We have to do with the supposed religious opinions and intentions of the Scotch people, which, it is imagined, will assist the Government in connection with the Scotch bill as no opinions or intentions would assist them in connection with any other bill. Circumstances, just now, are calculated to draw forth the religious feeling of Scotland with special force. Dean Stanley has been delivering in Edinburgh four lectures in favour of an Established Church. He apparently cares for nothing relating to the form of the church, so that it be an Established Church, and his advice is that that church should be supported independently of all religious conviction attaching to it, and that in Scotland as in England men should hold their connection with a State religion, in spite of the dishonesty of subscribing to articles and confessions which they do not believe. To this unholy counsel the Scotch people are likely to offer a manful repudiation. Their religious instincts will treat it as an offence. The effect of Dean Stanley's doctrine will be that the religious feeling of the country will be indefinitely increased, in opposition to this Erastian immorality. But Scotch liberality frequently shows itself in an Erastian form; and our views of secular education may easily be confounded with unreligious aims. Sir, we have, if possible, to prevent this misrepresentation. In opposition to the feeling which desires the teaching of religion in national schools, we have to demonstrate that the most earnest form of the religion of England—the religion which belongs to us as English Nonconformists—may I not say, speaking in general terms, the religion of the country itself, for we here represent the religion of our country as no other body could do, shall be displayed on the side of a liberty which allows of no interference with religious action—confining all public measures to those civil things in which the people are agreed. We will throw into the Scotch scale that religious influence which their own country does not, or may not supply, and thus uphold the principles of those who will act with us in Scotland on secular

grounds, giving to the measures we advocate that religious character and power which otherwise they would not have. That is the simple matter which I have to bring before the Conference; and, for the reasons I have stated, I especially advocate the resolution which has been moved, and which, in this form, I commend to your earnest attention. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. Mr. CRAIG (Glasgow): Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, if all the voluntaries in Scotland had been as true to their principles and as consistent in the discussion of them as Mr. Renton (of Kelso), the controversy in Scotland would be much nearer a conclusion. There is no one who takes an interest in the question who cannot corroborate the statements just made by Mr. Dale. But there is no use disguising the fact that very few Scotch ministers have yet had the boldness to avow their belief in a secular system of education as a final settlement of this question, and you have expressed principles to-day which seem to me far ahead of what is the common feeling yet in Scotland. Sir, when listening to the eloquent speeches on Tuesday night, I had the wish that there might be speedily more exceptions to that rule the wisdom of which is attributed to Mr. Punch, who said that when clever Scotchmen found their way south they never discovered the road home again. (Laughter.) The eloquent Scotchmen who so ably spoke on this education question on Tuesday night would do well, I think, to seek the way home again, at least for a little time, and try to educate the people there up to the sentiments which have been so ably expressed here. (Cries of "No, no," and laughter.) You may not desiderate such a thing, but at least you may allow us to have the help of these men for a time. Depend upon it the ground of battle in this controversy during the coming session will be the Scotch Education Bill. There are three points in the resolution which has been read to which your attention should be distinctly turned. The first is that you, as Englishmen, ought to support, and you have nobly supported, the great principle of uniform education for the three kingdoms. If we had home rule in Scotland to-day, I am afraid you could not carry that. (Hear, hear.) Nevertheless, the sentiment is gradually changing. Three years ago, even you, with all your enthusiasm, were not united. (Hear, hear.) At present there is no Bill for Scotland before the country. The

Lord-Advocate told us that the last Bill was withdrawn. We have but hazy ideas concerning the principles that will regulate the Government Bill. The Lord-Advocate has hinted, indeed, that he is leaning towards our platform, but that he must legislate for the feeling of Scotland. Now, you have distinctly to protest in the name of common justice, since the money is paid from the Imperial exchequer, that Scotland in this matter should not get any system of education that would hand over the teaching in Ireland to the popish priest. I believe that in a short time this same sentiment, when once it has been aroused in the country, will weld together the different sections of the religious community, and make them willing to accept a secular system—not a godless system as we have heard, by no means, but a system in which the ordinary education of the school will be kept distinct from the religious instruction imparted by voluntary effort. Try then, as far as you can, to help us by your influence. And observe the second point—"The first measure coming before Parliament to which these principles can be applied." You pledge yourselves, if you approve this resolution, to do your utmost, by petition and otherwise, to see to it that that measure does not contradict your sentiments; that, whereas in Scotland there has been a time-serving policy, hereafter national education should be united to the great principle of religious equality, and it can never stand on any surer basis than that. I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution. (Cheers.)

Mr. GEORGE BROWN (Aberdeen): Don't be alarmed, gentlemen, I am not going to make a speech, but having travelled upwards of 400 miles for the express purpose of attending this Conference I wish to take the opportunity of informing this meeting how thoroughly your Scotch friends sympathise in your movement; and although we are few in number, and the nation is but a small nation,—(laughter),—yet, small as it is, and limited as is its representation,—because we are entitled, both by our numbers and the amount of our taxation, to a much larger representation than we have,—yet few as are our representatives, they are in much larger proportion than any other part of the empire on the Liberal side. (Hear, hear.) The statement that has been made is quite correct, that there is no Tory representative for a town in Scotland,

and a large number of counties are represented by Liberals. My own county of Aberdeen was long considered the hotbed of Toryism, but a few years ago it was divided into two, and both members are now thoroughly Liberal; and the member for East Aberdeenshire, although himself a member of the Free Church, which is far from sound on this subject, is himself thoroughly sound, and has announced the very programme that this Conference has laid down. (Cheers.) So that I am satisfied if our English friends can get their members to stand as staunch to their Nonconformist principles and programme as the Scotch members will do, there is no fear of the result. We are not so few in number in proportion to the population as some of our friends have said. I have a full conviction, and I will state my reason for it, that, after all, if Scotland were polled, the majority of electors would be found to be voluntaries in sentiment and in practice. There is the United Presbyterian Church, of which we have a most worthy representative present in Mr. Renton. They have been voluntaries to the backbone from the first. Then we have all the Independents, and they are neither small in number nor uninfluential in character. They are, of course, all staunch voluntaries; so are the Baptists, and there are a good many of them, and a great many others. But most of all we have the hard-headed working men of Scotland, and I am satisfied that if they were polled to-night the majority of them would subscribe to the programme that has been announced at this Conference. So that all you have to do when the Scotch Bill comes on is to watch it carefully. Do not allow it to pass without the programme of this Conference being engrafted into it. Then you will have a fair field to establish the Irish Bill upon the same footing, and to get back the English Education Act to the point from which it never should have been allowed to depart.

The Rev. J. FLETCHER (Christchurch): Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Conference, I should not have ventured to speak at all to-night., especially after the long sessions we have had, if it had not been that there are two points which I think ought to be brought under consideration. There is one party among us that has not been represented by any words that have been uttered during the whole proceedings of our Conference, and I happen to be one of that party. I must tell you that I have

held up my hand in behalf of every resolution that you have passed; but there was a time when I could not have entirely sympathised with the proceedings, even of the League. I have been from the beginning a voluntary of the voluntaries, and have endeavoured to fight that battle wherever the opportunity offered, whether with reference to religion as established in this country and in other parts of the empire, or to education itself. For many years I have felt myself in this peculiar difficulty, that our Nonconformist brethren were giving their sanction not merely to the new School Board system, and to the reception of money for the purpose of teaching religion in the new Board schools, but that they were giving their sanction to the old system of grants; and as my attention has long been brought to the latter by the peculiar circumstances in which I have been placed, I have always felt that I could not go with my reason and with my conscience and my heart, in support of any proposed system so long as there was the acknowledgment of the right to teach religion or even to have the Bible in our Board schools; and so long as there was the acknowledged right on the part of existing denominational schools to receive directly from the public purse grants for religion, of course I thought that every man in the country had sufficient common sense to see that the Conscience Clause was a mere sham and a delusion, and that the great majority of the denominational schools receiving grants were created and supported for denominational purposes alone. We have come now, I think, to take more just and comprehensive views on the subject of national education, and to place it on a very different basis from that which we occupied before. Let those views be adopted and all will be equitable and fair. I have been in connection with a purely voluntary school during the whole course of my ministry in a certain place. We have at this moment a perfectly voluntary school, and it has been so for fifty years. I have been asked to give this up in order that there might be a petition for a School Board. I said at once even to those who wanted a School Board, "Let us see what we are about. If I give up this school, which is better than the national and has been proved to be so by a test which has been applied by a purely voluntary society, I mean that grand and noble society

the Society of Arts, which has something to do with the education of our country, if I give up this school, and ask for a School Board then we shall be in this most unhappy predicament of giving up our own school for a Board school, the management and character of which is uncertain, and of having an existing national school to compete with which has received a thousand pounds for its building and a large portion of the expenses connectedwith its educational system, while we Dissenters shall be left at sea with every one of our children taken away from us." Now, gentlemen, so long as the great Nonconformist body prosecuted their object with a desire to compromise matters, to have a Bible in the school and to allow the existing denominational schools to receive the grants, I never could go with them; but now you have thrown both of these things overboard, now you go in England for a secular system, while all religion is to be taught entirely on the voluntary principle, and to be supported by it. You do the same for Ireland, and that is the only way to deal with the Irish difficulty. You are going to do the same thing for Scotland, and it is the only thing that will harmonise the various sects of Scotland. Let them only be brought under the operation of a righteous system, and then their divisions will be healed and the people will become more united; then they will not be rivals, but coadjutors in the grand and glorious work of educating their country. This one thing I have to say for myself, and I think I may say it for many who have been hitherto pure voluntaries, that in consideration of the grandeur of the scheme which we are now contemplating—for it is a grand scheme,—in consideration of what is now proposed in this Conference of Nonconformists, and what we hope to do in our own country, and in Ireland, and in Scotland; in consideration of the great aim which we have,—to bring the whole empire under one uniform and equitable system, well based, because based on justice, I am prepared, and I think my brethren also who are in my position, will be prepared to say, "Well, we will give up our schools as soon as you can procure by the legislation of this country that there shall be no more denominational grants, and no more teaching of religion in the Board Schools. Then our people will come forward and supplement the religious want as they have for fifty years supplemented other wants.

both in relation to religion and education." (Cheers.) The other point I am not going to open out at all, but simply to glance at. It is this: We have a grave and difficult work before us, and we are not, I trust, going away from this Conference as if we were triumphant; we are going each of us to the work which is implied in our attending here, and our assenting to the various resolutions which have been passed. The denominational system is deeply intrenched. In Parliament there is a very influential party prepared to resist to the utmost; and if you look through the country you will find that there are great difficulties in the way—not, it may be, in large towns like Manchester or Liverpool, but in some of our rural towns and in many of our southern counties. Those who labour among the people in country towns know how much there is there that is directly against us, how much to mislead, to misrepresent, to scandalise, to slander, to do everything to hinder this movement; and if you look to the Government, you will see that they are not asking "What do the people think?" but "What do the clergy think? What do the gentry think? What do those who have secured good positions in Parliament think?" We have got a very hard fight before us. But then we are mounted on a good steed, the good steed *principle*, and if you will only stick your knees into it and ride on, though you may have to go over hedges and ditches, and stone walls, and all manner of difficulties, it will bring you out at last in the right place. (Cheers.)

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mr. R. W. DALE: I feel that some apology is due to the Conference for the very imperfect manner in which one of the resolutions was presented to it in the Free Trade Hall last night; and I feel that another apology is due to it, inasmuch as we failed adequately to explain the meaning of certain words in that resolution, by which the Conference was greatly perplexed. I have requested permission to submit, this evening, a resolution expressing all that those words in brackets, by which some of you were perplexed last night, were intended by us to express. The words as they stood were extremely ambiguous, and were very open to the criticisms that were offered upon them. I consented to have them withdrawn, because I perceived that their intention

was misunderstood, and I thought it possible that if they were submitted to the Conference they might be rejected in consequence of that misunderstanding. I attached so much importance to what the words were intended to express that I preferred to withdraw the words altogether to the risk of having them rejected. Now, although the Conference very naturally failed to appreciate the exact intention of those words last night, the writer of a leading article in the *Times* this morning has perfectly comprehended their intention, and I beg to call the attention of the Conference to the following passage from that article. "The Conference distinctly refused to adopt a proviso that the religious teaching before and after the hours of secular instruction should not be conducted by the teachers engaged during those hours. What then is the difference between the system thus shadowed forth and approved, and the system actually in operation under the Act of 1870?" Under the present Act the schoolmaster engaged to give secular instruction, is also engaged to give religious instruction before or after the secular instruction. What we are most anxious to secure is this, that the schoolmaster should not be engaged by any sect to give religious instruction in the school buildings before or after the ordinary secular instruction that is intended to be given by the Board. (Cheers.) We are perfectly sure that if school-boards are permitted to suffer their schoolmasters to enter into arrangements of this kind, this will happen in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred of the rural parishes in England. The schoolmaster, when he appears before the Board, will be informed that his salary for secular instruction will be from £80 to £90 a year, perhaps; and that if he consents to give religious instruction, to teach children the Church Catechism and the collects for an hour before school every morning, he will receive an additional £5 from the clergyman. That is, the position will be, practically, precisely the same as it is now; and we must distinctly protest against the possibility of its being supposed that this Conference would permit such an arrangement to be made between a sect and a schoolmaster. I have, therefore, ventured to ask permission to submit a resolution to the Conference which I hope will express this somewhat more definitely than the words which were contained in the resolution last night. We are

anxious to protest against this arrangement, not only in the interests of religious equality, but in the interests of the schoolmasters of the country. Gentlemen, we shall find our strongest allies in this struggle among the certificated schoolmasters in national schools. We have abundant evidence that these men groan under the tyranny to which they are continually subjected by the clergymen who have the confidence of the Board. (Hear, hear.) For their sakes, to prevent the profession of the schoolmaster from becoming a close profession into which no man shall be able to enter who is not prepared to teach Church of England doctrines in rural districts, we ask you to accept this resolution. I think one reason why we did not make our meaning clear last night was this: Those of us who had the preparation of the resolutions, had been discussing at great length last week the new programme of the National Education League. By that programme it is provided that School Boards may permit school buildings to be used out of school hours by religious communities, who are prepared to provide religious instruction at their own cost. I do not wish to introduce to this Conference the discussion of that proposal. It is a proposal which requires very grave consideration, I think, before any one can pronounce what he himself would feel to be a final decision on its merits. But what I do ask the Conference to do is this—without pronouncing any opinion on that proposal, to declare that, should it be adopted, certain other consequences must follow. The minds of some of us were full of the long debates that we had last week in Birmingham about the new programme of the League, a programme which I most frankly accept, and which I shall do my utmost to carry; but I do not wish to introduce to this Conference the discussion of that particular element of it; therefore I have put the resolution in this form:—

"That in the event of school boards permitting religious communities to provide at their own cost for the giving of religious instruction out of school-hours, in buildings provided for the board—a proposal on which no opinion is pronounced—this Conference desires to declare that in no case should the schoolmaster be employed to give that instruction."

The Rev. A. HANNAY: I have consented to second this resolution, chiefly because I was one of the delegates, who, at the meeting

yesterday evening, objected to the parenthetical clause, in order that it may appear clearly to our vigilant censors outside, that the objection taken to that clause did not arise from any qualified approval of the proposal to separate the function of the teacher in secular matters entirely from the function of the teacher in matters religious. It was because we very strongly held by this distinction, and supposed some confusion of thought might arise about it, that we took up the ground that was then assumed. I had hardly reached my temporary home before I felt regret that Mr. Maclaren's proposal to postpone the matter until this morning had not been accepted, for I felt then just as I feel now, that the probability would be that if matters took the course which the League recommends or is prepared to concede, that the buildings of the school boards shall be used out of school hours for religious teaching, and if it were conceded that the teacher of the school, being a Government official, should give the religious teaching, the election of teachers would be apt to be vitiated by private and underhand negotiations with candidates on the part of members of school boards, anxious to secure a certain kind of religious teaching, and not very scrupulous as to the mode. On this ground I feel that it is most fitting that we should take up the position which the resolution indicates, according to which the teacher is left free, as the parenthetical clause would not have left him free to engage in religious teaching anywhere except in his own school, and we are protected from confusion of thought in regard to the functions of Government teachers, and remove a temptation out of the way of school boards which might lead to the worst form of sectarian conflict in almost every parish in England. (Cheers.)

Rev. F. S. JOHNSTONE: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, as I commenced the opposition last night to the exceedingly ambiguous clause, I rise now simply to state my cordial approval of the resolution. I think we should have made a great mistake by passing that clause, because it would, in my opinion, and in the opinion I believe of the great majority of this Conference, have prevented schoolmasters from having the ordinary liberties of a British subject. At the same time I see that it is exceedingly necessary that we should give a distinct utterance upon the employment of schoolmasters for religious instruction. I think the

resolution meets the case exactly, and I trust we shall pass it unanimously.

Mr. HARTLEY: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, at this advanced period of our Conference, I think we must be content with five minutes instead of ten. I have only two or three things to say, and I will say them in as few words as possible. First, I wish to support the resolution that Mr. Dale has moved, because it removes the misconception which would have been caused, and which has been caused by the omission of the clause last evening. That has been so ably laid before you by Mr. Dale and Mr. Hannay that I need not say another word about it. Then I wish to support this resolution mainly because it recognises a principle about which I humbly submit rather too little has been said at the previous meetings of this Conference. I gladly accept the decision which has been come to, and which I had come to a long while ago. I do not think we have enunciated anything new in the principles we have adopted at this Conference. I believe they are the old principles returned to after some aberrations, for as I hold it, the principles upon which we always acted were these two. First, that Government has nothing to do with the teaching of religion, and I never can understand what difference it makes whether that teaching is given to the old or the young; and secondly, that no one can properly teach religion but religious persons. In fighting the battle, which in common with some others I have had to fight in London on this matter, I always agreed to this statement, that education properly considered must include religious teaching. None of us object to that. There can be no perfect education without religion. The question is whether that religion must be given in a certain building and by a certain man, or whether it should be given by those to whom it specially belongs. We have agreed that we will adopt that principle—the State to do its own work, and the churches to do theirs; but let us take care that the churches do do theirs. There is an immense responsibility involved in the acceptance of the programme upon which we have agreed, and we are more than ever bound to see that in some way or another the youthful portion of this country have a sound religious education. I venture to press it upon the conscience of every gentleman here, and especially upon the consciences of those who have so eloquently

advocated the confining of the State to its own proper duties, that they would do all they can to see that our Churches do their part in the future, as I am bold to say they have not done sufficiently in the past in reference to this great matter. Whatever can be done should be done in this direction. The improvement of our Sunday schools must be looked to. That work must not be left so much to the young and the uneducated, and the inexperienced. The very cream of the piety and the talent of our churches should be enlisted in that work; and we must not lose, in the efforts which we have been making in one direction, the sense of our responsibility in the other. I ask every gentleman to go home determined in reference to this matter to do his duty, not only in this but in other departments. If week evening classes for instruction in religion must be formed, or if classes for the instruction of the upper classes must be established apart from the Sunday school in the rooms of those who have rooms at their disposal, and who have talent and ability to teach, or in whatever way this business can be done, the churches are bound to do it, and thus vindicate their consistency in reference to the work they have undertaken.

Mr. JOSEPH SPENCER—Having taken part in the discussion of last night, very unpleasantly to myself, I feel bound, now that the resolution is put into a shape in which I can concur, to say that I heartily agree with the resolution in its altered form.

Rev. Professor ANTHONY (Plymouth):—I will endeavour as far as possible to put what I have to say in the space of two or three minutes. As I am not able, I fear, quite to take the ground which has been taken with regard to Mr. Dale's resolution, I should be glad to give you the reason why. I do not quite understand from what Mr. Dale has said, whether this resolution is put before us in order to help the schoolmaster, to save him from difficulty, or to help the ratepayer. I cannot be a party, and I do not believe there is a gentleman here who would be a party, to putting any religious disability upon one of our fellow-citizens, even though he be a schoolmaster, and if you have a regulation by which you forbid the schoolmaster to teach in his school that which he believes to be true, under the direction of those who employ him, you will shut out at once a large number of most

valuable men who otherwise will be engaged in this work. ("No, no.") Let us remember that we have now formally initiated a secular system, and by your new platform we forbid any instruction to be given in school hours but that which is purely secular. I for my part, as a religious man, would not undertake the duty of a schoolmaster if in undertaking that duty I was prevented, if I had the opportunity, from teaching children under my care at proper times and fenced by proper conditions, that which I believed to be God's truth. And let me note one more point. Exclude the schoolmaster by your resolution, and where are you for teachers? Take my own county, Devonshire. You will find that if you do not allow the schoolmaster to teach you will have the clergyman or some one in the hands of the clergyman who will teach—(hear, hear)—and in our country districts such an influence can be brought to bear upon the parents of the children that it may be as much as their position in the village is worth, when Christmas comes, if their children are not present at the time when religious instruction is given. It is the good boy who learns the Catechism who will receive the good Christmas gifts. Therefore, I say, we do not save ourselves from the difficulty apprehended by the mover of this resolution, and in addition to that we put upon the schoolmaster a religious disability. ("No, no.") If you differ from me so let it be, but I would suggest to Mr. Dale—(confusion and cries of "order.")

The CHAIRMAN: This is a Conference. We have come from all parts of the kingdom in order that we may have a very general expression of opinion. We do not want to hear opinions on one side only, and I beg that you will hear Mr. Anthony.

Rev. Professor ANTHONY: I would suggest whether it would not meet the case if Mr. Dale were to introduce this into his resolution, "Provided that it be no condition in the engagement of the schoolmaster by the Board that he shall be required to give that religious instruction." That will save the position of the schoolmaster in this matter, so that he will not be compelled to accept an engagement of the Board by which he will give religious instruction, but you leave it still free for him, if he is so disposed, to give that religious instruction which may be required by the managers of the school out of school hours. I am sorry to have to intrude this

matter upon you, but I have very earnestly and seriously looked at the matter since the meeting of last night, and I feel as an upholder of the purest and simplest religious liberty, that I can be no party to any resolution by which, as I have said before, you will prevent a religious man at proper times and under proper conditions from teaching such religious doctrines as he believes to be true.

Rev. E. S. SHIELDS (Wisbeach): I should be sorry to stand between this meeting and Mr. Miall for more than two or three minutes. I agree with the resolution proposed by Mr. Dale, but it seems to me from the speeches made during this discussion that the fact has been ignored—or rather overlooked—of there being schoolmasters who are Nonconformists. Now, I have a case of some importance to bring before this Conference, as the principle of the personal religious liberty of the schoolmaster is involved in it. I will tell my tale and then sit down. I know a young man—a schoolmaster—who expected to be appointed master under a school board, and who is a Dissenter. He is not a Sunday-school teacher, but he happens to be a lay preacher. The young man, being an efficient teacher, had so obtained the esteem of the people that almost all the children in the neighbourhood went to his British school, so that the national school had but very few scholars. He was told by a member of the school-board—a clergyman—that he could not be a schoolmaster under the Board, according to the 42nd Article of Code of the Regulations for 1871, as he was not a *bonâ fide* layman, seeing that he engaged in public preaching. The clerk of the Board—on which there is a majority of Churchmen—was instructed to write to the Committee of Council about the case, and a letter was received from the Education Department which completely confirmed the views of the clergyman, as it stated that the young man would not be eligible for the office of schoolmaster in any elementary school, unless he gave a distinct promise to abstain from all public religious ministrations. (Shame, shame.) I saw a letter from the Clerk to the Board, containing a copy of what he had received from the Education Department. Now it strikes me that there are in various parts of the country schoolmasters who preach occasionally, and I think there ought to be some notice taken of

this matter. Several previous speakers have seemed anxious—and rightly too—that the personal liberty of schoolmasters who are Churchmen should not be infringed upon; I feel as anxious that the personal liberty of schoolmasters who are Nonconformists should be equally respected. No doubt clergymen would like to see schoolmasters leading the children on Sunday to the Establishment. I will venture to say that a schoolmaster doing that can be more of a sectarian than another who may occasionally preach a sermon in his own neighbourhood, or in a village a few miles from his home.

Mr. E. MIALL, M.P. :—I wish to say only a word or two in reference to this resolution, and if possible so to explain it that it shall not be misunderstood by any member of the Conference. We desire to lay no religious disability upon any man in the realm—(hear, hear)—but we say that the schoolmaster is a representative of public authority, and that, in his character as an officer employed by the Government to do certain things, he shall not take a commission to pursue religious teaching and instruction from any body of men, by which a confusion shall be made in the minds of those with whom he comes in contact, as to the sphere of action in which he may legitimately act. So long as he is not employed by any religious body, or so long as he is acting only upon his own responsibility, out of the sphere which the law assigns to him, he may exercise whatever religious influence he has, and teach anybody who will listen to his teaching. (Cheers.)

Mr. R. W. DALE :—After what Mr. Miall has said I will not do the Assembly the discourtesy to suppose that it is necessary that I should offer a reply.

The resolution was put and carried with one dissentient.

Rev. Mr. STATHAM (in the absence of Mr. Kelly) proposed :—

"That this Conference desires to express its cordial approval of the action of Edward Miall, Esq., M.P., in submitting to Parliament last session a motion for the disestablishment of the Churches of England and Scotland, and its admiration of the courage, vigour and consistency with which throughout his public life he has illustrated and defended the principles of religious equality."

He said: The resolution I now propose has to do with the great coming campaign. Ecclesiastical establishments lie at the root of

legislative difficulties, not only in connection with the Education question which now so prominently engages the mind of the nation, but of many other of our political and social grievances; and until we deal a successful blow at the root, we are only trimming away at the branches of the evil. Our purpose then now is not only to express our unabated confidence in Edward Miall, Esq., M.P., but to make manifest on the part of this great Conference our united and hearty determination to stand shoulder to shoulder together as a united and hearty band ready to render Mr. Miall unswerving allegiance in his future action in the Commons House of Parliament. I have called it a campaign, because although ultimate victory is certain—there is much of patient endurance and hard toil to be undergone before the desired goal of religious equality is reached. There will inevitably be a contest growing hotter and hotter, all along the line which separates Conformist from Nonconformist alike in England, Scotland, and Wales. Our position now differs from that of former eras in our history on this wise—whilst we have the established churches before us, we have one disestablished church behind us—and as it is true that the prestige of one great success has much to do with the metal of an army in relation to its future fights, so we are bold to think that the carrying of the heights, and the successful storming of the citadel in Ireland will nerve our arms in relation to the more formidable conflict before us. In this conflict we are engaged as religious men, animated as we hope and believe by the spirit of the Great Master, and true to the highest interests of Christianity itself. The struggle may be embittered by party feeling, but it will not be so by us, we seek nothing for ourselves. Those who stigmatise us as seeking supremacy for ourselves may wish the charge were true, but they know full well that it is not. The struggle may be long, though some of us are sanguine enough to think that the ultimate victory of religious equality over sectarian privilege is not so very far off. The last parliamentary division went, as we all full well knew it would, against Mr. Miall, yet it was in the truest sense a success. The number voting on the affirmative side was far larger than many of us expected, and it was a united force. This in itself augurs well for the future, especially when you contrast the ayes with the noes. These latter consisted of a confused army of Adullamites,—of

Tories of the old school, and Tories of the new,—mingled with a few Liberals looking out for a creed, and a few more who have lost their creed. We say nothing of the place-creed, although from time immemorial, in Parliamentary life, there have been those whose creed, *unlike* the Athanasian, is summed up in one sentence,—"I believe in place,"—and *like* the Athanasian has a damnatory clause appended,—"This is the placeman's creed, which whoso believeth not in cannot be politically saved." When any man or men vote in place for what they did not vote for out of place, we need not be ungenerous enough to criticise their motives, we can only regard it as a remarkable and inexplicable phenomenon. The opposition was a medley,—Mr. Miall's party constituted a unity. Moreover, the "noes" have all the forces of the age against them,—Mr. Miall had, to a large extent, the political sentiment of the continent on his side. Mr. Miall is ready to renew the campaign, and we, the rank and file of his party, cannot bivouac in ease while his stirring trumpet calls us to the war. Certain it is that we shall be misrepresented, that we shall have such euphonious names as robbers applied again to ourselves, and that we shall be wilfully misunderstood as enemies of the Episcopal Church when we are in reality amongst her truest friends. When the opportunity occurs again for Mr. Miall to make his motion, we have only this to say to all dilettanti members of Parliament,—that if they abstain from voting on our side, our view of their position will be this,—"he that is not with me is against me." Not to vote may appear to be neutrality, but it is infidelity to the cause. We are moved, gentlemen, by many motives. We are not destructionists; a falser accusation never was made. We are constructionists. Out of the debris of the disestablished Irish Church a better will be erected than the one which was buttressed up by prestige and privilege. We are no enemies to the Episcopal Church as such, and in all the long conflicts of our leaders it can never be charged against Mr. Miall that he ever once cast a stone either at the creed, or the ritual, or the rubric of the Episcopal Church. Nor have we in our capacity as Nonconformists done so—there is much in her, very much, that we appreciate, reverence and love. Our battle has not been with the men or their manners, though these latter have sometimes been rather destitute of "mildness

and sweet reasonableness;" but our battle has been with a great system of ecclesiastical dominations. We honestly believe that the best thing for religion itself, for the cause of the Saviour we serve, and of the nation we love, will be the setting free of the English Church. If the Tory papers call us all the bad names in Dr. Johnson's dictionary, from the mild epithet of pillagers on to the expletives unutterable, all we can say is "let them." Some of the Manchester hoardings I notice are so covered with bills, red, black, and blue, that all the next bill-sticker can do is to blot out an old one in posting up a new one, and really we are so covered now, that there is no room for more. Some of the relics of the old ones still remain, which were used during the passing of the Irish Disestablishment Bill, and if they amused our opponents, we are quite ready to testify that they did not hurt us. Gentlemen, bad names hurt no one but the speakers of them, and "curses, like chicken, come home to roost." We remember one who was called Beelzebub, and the servant is not above his master. We believe, moreover, that the opposite elements in the English Church had better be set free to go to "their own company," and that the monstrous coalition of Romanists, Evangelicals, Rationalists, and Pyrrhonists, had better for truth's sake, better for honour's sake, better for the sake of the common conscience, be speedily brought to nought. Mr. Miall, I say, in leading the cause of Disestablishment, is doing a most religious work, in which we can sincerely ask the blessing of Almighty God. Mr. Miall, too, is doing a great *social* work. The Establishment has all too long divided England against herself. The geologic strata are not more definite and distinct than the old lines between Conformist and Nonconformist. In towns and cities we feel it, but in villages Hindoo caste is not a more sad reality. In the cricket field, in the skating club, in the book society, in the grammar school, in the reading-room, in the winter tea-parties and the summer croquet-parties, church people so-called give a sniff at "this man who was a Samaritan." It touches, too, on our great philanthropic works. We are divided even here—we have church sailors' orphan homes and chapel sailors' orphan homes, church young men's institutes and chapel young men's institutes, church ragged schools and chapel ragged schools. There is a disturbing force

at work poisoning the very fountains of social peace, setting family against family, and sometimes making a man's foes even they of his own household. On religious, on social, and on philanthropic grounds, then, we meet to-night to strengthen Mr. Miall's hands—and even on intellectual grounds, for even in literature the leaven does its work. I am uttering a fact known to many of you, when I say that writers who are supposed to be under the prestige of the Establishment have a considerable vantage ground of influence in that very fact. Yes, ecclesiastical establishments are in all aspects unjust, unfair, unchristian. Well, gentlemen, thinkers among the Conservatives, who "see ahead," mark the signs of the times, and, lo! concerning Nonconformist treatment there is quite a pantomimic transformation scene. The patron of Establishment, two centuries ago, stood at the door of his house urging the nation to worry, to persecute, and, if necessary, to imprison Dissenters. Then, after a lapse of time, appearing again, he altered his address, and said, some 50 years ago, tolerate them—make them as uncomfortable as you like; but, I am afraid we must tolerate them. And now, surely it cannot be the same patron, for it is his way and his manner are changed; but it is the same voice. He is beckoning—calling—throwing open his arms—bidding the beadle unbolt the other half of the church door, and let the once scourged, once tolerated, and once patronised Dissenters in. A new discovery has been made. There is actually room for us. We ought never to have been cast out at all. And this same Establishment loves us very much. Comprehension? No! Where are the remains of our fathers? Laws change, customs change, manners change, but principles never change. We object as much on principle now as our brave forefathers did in times of old to any Church Establishment, be they Scotch or English. Not for us now the easy surrender of our grand old camp, our fathers' swords were well trusted and well tried, and we take up the weapons which have fallen from their hands. Not for us the sweet luxury of interchanging pulpits whilst the one brother patronises and the other is a patronised man; not for us after the long conflicts of years, an unworthy compromise as the close of the weary war. No, no! let us from this great meeting tell the parliament, tell the nation.

tell our constituencies, tell our sons that by God's help we mean to rekindle the fires of our old feud, and to retake our old vows; whilst we surround the altar where our sires first stood so sternly by the shield of liberty. Gentlemen, we have had enough of the insult of toleration, and we are not so lost to honour as to desert the cause just as the sharpest conflict begins. We undertake the war as patriots; we undertake it as Liberals; we undertake it as Christians. The *Times* of this day says, "Not even Mr. Miall can be said to possess the power of compelling the attention of the House of Commons." Well, we shall see. Printing House Square has prophesied falsely before now! But the genius of the scribe will not desert them when their prophecy fails. No, the art of putting things will not desert them. I fancy, gentlemen, that I take up the *Times* of 1882, and read thus: "All along we have seen the ultimate issue of this great conflict, and from time to time have expressed ourselves confident that the English Church would be found well prepared for its coming freedom, but let not Mr. Miall and his friends think that the division of last night was the result of their often ill-timed zeal—it is due not to political agitators, *but to that craving for freedom which has secretly affected the English Church itself.*" But, gentlemen, the English people will pronounce a far different verdict from that. There is a heart of justice in this grand old nation still. Mr. E. Miall, the representative in Parliament of our great cause, will carry us to the height of victory if God should spare his health and life, which we most earnestly pray that he may do; and he will win a place in the records of national history second to none in the long roll of patriots whose monuments adorn our hall at Westminster, and whose memory in the hearts of a nation worthy of its ancestors never dies. We are here now to resolve in the majesty of an indefeasible purpose, and in the strength of that justice which is the inspiration of God, that we will never bate heart or hope till the bright day of religious equality, and with that we hope religious unity, dawns upon our land.

Mr. BENJAMIN ARMITAGE: I rise to second the motion. We are engaged in an enterprise which has for its purpose the doing of a great good—politically, socially, and religiously—to the people of this country. Mr. Miall has carried on the cause with unswerving

courage and unerring patriotism. He is the political leader of the Nonconformists of the country, and I believe that Mr. Miall may be as proud of his army as his army is of its leader. (Applause.)

The resolution was passed amid enthusiastic cheering.

Mr. MIALL, M.P.: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Conference—You may imagine that the resolution that you have just now passed with perfect unanimity and with, perhaps, too great enthusiasm—(no, no)—introduced as it was and seconded by speeches that made me hold down my head, because I think there was more attributed to my personal exertions and influence than ought to have been attributed—(no, no)—you may imagine what are the emotions which fill my bosom at the present time in consequence of the distinction I have just now received. For I agree with Mr. Armitage entirely that you have conferred an honour upon me, and that it is a great distinction to a man, of which he ought to feel proud, that he is acknowledged as a leader by such an assembly as we have had here these last few days. For intellectual vigour, for self-restraint, for a high sense of moral feeling, for a determination to sacrifice everything that can be sacrificed where principle is not concerned, in order that unity may be effected, for the clearness with which great political and politico-ecclesiastical questions have been put forth in your resolutions, and the high order of eloquence by which they have been argued out and sustained, I do not remember that any assembly has been called together—at least within the range of my experience and observation—equal to this. You have spoken of my courage, gentlemen; I cannot take to myself the compliment that you pay me. The strongest feeling that weighed with me in bringing forward the motion which I did in the House of Commons was—first, the desire to accomplish the end of my life; that for which I have longed, and laboured, and prayed, and striven whenever the opportunity presented itself—(cheers)—and secondly, because my conscience was weighed down with something like the feeling which the Apostle expressed when he said, "Yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." I was sustained by the sympathy, and I may say by the prayers of Nonconformists throughout the country; and it was in faith that those prayers would be answered that I rejoiced in the experience—an experience which I never had before in my

life—that on the morning of the day upon which I was to bring forward that motion all clouds lifted off my mind, and I felt that if ever the prayers of people were answered they were answered in my personal experience. I can take no credit to myself. I can only say that I attempted to perform a duty from which I shrank, and that I was assisted in the performance of it. (Cheers.) And whatever may be the future, or whatever may be the modes in which I shall attempt to follow up this movement hereafter, I do feel that the great end for which I have laboured has been accomplished, and, that I have been the feeble instrument in the hands of Divine Providence in being permitted to introduce to the Legislature of this country a full exposition of the great principles of religious equality and the spirituality of the Church of Christ. With me it has been very much a religious work. I have been sustained and prompted by religious feelings, and so long as God may spare my life, and so long as he may continue to me my powers in some way or other, whether as leader or as follower, I shall be rejoiced to help forward this great and mighty work. (Cheers.) Once more accept my hearty thanks for your kind sympathy with me and for the generous expression which you have given to me of your approbation and support. (Loud cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN: I beg to move the following resolution:—

"That the best thanks of this Conference be given to the Society of Friends in Manchester for the generous kindness they have shown in freely granting to the Conference the use of their meeting house; and also to the Committee of the Friends' Institute for the courtesy with which they have promoted the convenience and comfort of the delegates and visitors by placing the rooms of the institute at their disposal."

This resolution needs no comment and no advocacy, and I beg to move it.

Mr. J. A. BEITH: As a member of the Working Committee who have carried out the arrangements, I have been asked to second the resolution. When this Conference was originally projected, we contemplated holding it in the Town Hall; but from the number of delegates coming, it was found totally insufficient to contain them, and apparently no other suitable place existed. In our need the friends have been to us "friends indeed." I think

we ought not to separate without noticing this, that while a great many people are very fond of maligning us as irreligious, that communion of Christians who, of all others, are celebrated for their simple faith in and profound love of the Bible, have permitted us the use of this room. I think that is a comment upon the maligning words that have been so often uttered against us—a silent comment which our maligners will find it very difficult to answer.

The resolution was unanimously carried.

Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY: The resolution which I have the honour to propose is one on behalf of the delegates who are assembled here,—returning our heartiest thanks to the chairman, the secretaries, and members of the Manchester Nonconformist Association for the zeal, the energy, the liberality, and the ability with which they have discharged the heavy and responsible labours which have been imposed upon them in connection with this Conference,—a Conference which marks an epoch in the history of Nonconformity, and in the history of the religious liberties of England. (Loud cheers.) In proposing this resolution I can testify, knowing the details of the Conference, that every word of it is beneath the mark, and that the ability and zeal which have been shown could only have been sustained by a conviction of the high and important principles involved in these proceedings, and a noble devotion to the cause of freedom and of God. Sir, this Conference was freely called. We made no attempt to pack our meetings, or to secure one single representative from any body whatever. We appealed to the country, and the life of the country responded of itself to the appeal. Every resolution adopted by this Conference, with one exception on a point of detail from which there was one dissentient only, has been passed perfectly unanimously by upwards of 1,800 representatives of 800 associations of the Nonconformists of England. (Cheers.) These resolutions have not been of a light character, dealing with insignificant details. We have asserted a broad principle to guide the future history of our country, potent in every direction to exalt and to ennoble the citizens of every sect and every party. The importance of this meeting is still further marked by the fact, that under a solemn and serious sense of responsibility, a responsibility which those who ventured to suggest the course have most deeply

felt through that old and historic connection with the great Liberal party which it has been heretofore their pride and delight to cherish, this Conference has been compelled to declare that its attachment to the principles of religious equality is stronger than its regard for any ties of party; and that any Liberal Government yet to come must accept the policy of absolute and complete religious equality, or forfeit the confidence of Nonconformists. (Cheers.) On behalf of upwards of 1,800 delegates, I venture to propose this resolution, conveying our heartiest thanks to those gentlemen in Manchester who have so nobly carried on this great work, and I ought to include in it our thanks for that prodigal and almost boundless hospitality which has proved at any rate that the cause of religious equality is the cause of hearty good fellowship all the world over. (Cheers.) I beg, sir, to move,

"That the heartiest thanks of the delegates here assembled be given to the Chairman, secretaries, and members of the committee of the Manchester Nonconformist Association, for the zeal, energy, liberality, and ability with which they have discharged the heavy and responsible labours which have been imposed upon them in connection with this Conference—a Conference which marks an epoch in the history of Nonconformity and in the history of the religious liberties of this empire. That this Conference also desires to express its cordial gratitude for the hearty and generous hospitality which its members have received from the friends in Manchester and its neighbourhood."

Mr. SNAPE: I beg to second the proposition. I venture to think that, in spite of what the *Times* says to-day about the want of influence and the smallness of the numbers attending this Conference,—(oh! oh!)—before this Mr. Gladstone will have repented of that which I cannot but call a braggart defiance that he flung at Mr. Miall in Parliament. And I venture also to think that the revolt, as it has been called, of Nonconformists will not be long, for the fundamental principles of Nonconformity and Liberalism are homogenous, they are inseparable, and the Liberal Government will either have to go over to the ranks of their opponents or to change their opinions and follow on in the pathway that we have cleared. I will not detain you further than to express our acknowledgments for the great assistance we have received from the Manchester secretaries, and our regret that Mr. Cobbett, one

of the secretaries, has been prevented by illness from attending.

The resolution was unanimously carried.

The Rev. A. THOMSON, M.A. :—I beg, on behalf of the officials and members of the Manchester Committee gratefully to acknowledge the vote of thanks which you have now passed for the performance of the labours that have devolved upon us in assembling this great Conference. Undoubtedly heavy duties have fallen upon some, and considerable anxiety and effort upon most if not all of our number; but these have been more than repaid by the wonderful, unlooked for and unparalleled success that has attended our Conference. I did not myself, and I am sure my fellow-members did not anticipate that the delegates would show themselves, I will not say so enthusiastic, but so clear-sighted in their perception of certain grand principles, and so thoroughly unanimous and firm in the enunciation and maintenance of them. We have had many fears with respect to some of these points. One of my fellow members said to me on Monday, "Now we are in for it, and we shall have a series of fights." I said, "Perhaps we shall, but we must go through with it." But we have had no fights, no contests that deserve the name. Many fogs have been cleared away; we now understand each other far better than we did before, and are conscious of our agreement in the light of common and acknowledged principles. I must also say that we do feel greatly indebted for the success of the proceedings of this Conference to our excellent friends of the Birmingham Central Nonconformist Committee. Without their aid in drawing up some of the most important resolutions, I do not know how we of the Manchester Committee, who have had less experience, who have been less engaged hitherto in this arduous work, could really have carried it through; and, therefore, that ought to be acknowledged. I would only say further, we must never forget this, that we are only at the *beginning* of the conflict. The enthusiasm has been kindled; it has been brought to a glowing point. We have now distinctly asserted our principles, and have put our foot down upon them. We have mustered our forces; we have pronounced our watchwords; we have pointed out those positions which we mean to assail in due order; and now you have to go each of you to your different districts, there to gather others around

you, to summon up your strength, and to put it forth with all the decision and consistency that will be needed in the many toils and conflicts that lie before us. There is victory at the end. We have the highest motives to sustain us; I trust we shall respond to them. We Nonconformists will not be less religious than we have hitherto been. I hope we shall be increasingly religious, in the truest sense, faithful to the principles of our spiritual life; but I trust also that in the future we shall prove more intelligent, more consistent, more united, and more resolute than before in our political action. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN, in acknowledging this vote of thanks, and in closing the Conference, said: Now that the Conference is drawing to a close, what substantial and permanent good shall we say we have gained? First the essential unity which exists among Nonconformists has been visibly manifested, and I trust in some degree strengthened. We are one in spirit always; one in action, when united action is required. Next there has been a clear and emphatic assertion of our principles, and a definite line of policy adopted. The iniquity of the past and recent legislation in favour of the Established Church has been so clearly shown, both here and elsewhere, that in all future elections we may count upon the support of those great popular constituencies which have never been found indifferent to the considerations of justice. Henceforth no statesman who calls himself Liberal will dare to turn a totally deaf ear to our claims. Some one or more of the grievous burdens which the existing laws cast upon Nonconformists will probably be lightened, or altogether removed. But, unless I am mistaken those distinguished men, whose powerful reasoning and manly eloquence have yesterday and to-day both instructed and delighted us, insist upon this or that special injustice, not so much that redress for the individual wrong should be demanded, but that it should be seen what serious mischiefs necessarily spring out of the unjust domination of a sect, what a brood of evils issue from the unholy union of Church and State. We must not, we dare not, be content with anything less than this, that all men shall be equal before the law; that the rights of conscience shall be held sacred; and that the temporal magistrate shall cease to be the head of the Church. In one word, that the Episcopal Church shall

be both disestablished and disendowed. Our religious, no less than our political, creed forbids us to acquiesce in any partial or inadequate treatment of this most urgent of all questions. We believe that the Lord Jesus is the Head of His Church, and we dare not assent to any compromise which shall give His glory to another. How then shall we give complete effect to these convictions? Doubtless we should be acting unworthily if we did not use to the full our political rights as Englishmen. Each one of the 1,800 delegates who have assembled here, sent by nearly 1,000 churches and associations, must, on his return, take this work in hand, and himself become the centre around which the forces of his district may gather. We have been challenged to the conflict, and we will not return the sword to its sheath till victory has crowned our efforts. But, after all, the weapons of our warfare must be mainly spiritual and moral; we must quicken our own sense of Christ's headship of His Church; we must strengthen our younger brethren in this faith; we must show the solid foundation of our doctrine to those Christian communities which still stand aloof. Strange and unnatural combinations are forming. Many who have spent their lives in the denunciation of popery are leaguing themselves with Ultramontane bishops in support of a scarcely disguised form of concurrent endowment. Perhaps presently subtle schemes will be suggested, whereby, if it be possible, to purchase the connivance of some among ourselves. But, by God's grace, we will be true to our principles, and steadfastly refuse all compromise; for we have three mighty forces with us—the current stream of history, reason, and the Word of God. (Cheers.)

The Conference then separated.

WELSH PUBLIC MEETING.

ON Thursday evening, the 25th, a large number of the delegates from the Principality joined a crowded assembly of Welsh Nonconformists residing in Manchester and the neighbourhood at a public meeting in the Hulme Town Hall. Mr. John Roberts, Liverpool, presided.

The CHAIRMAN, in his opening address, said he congratulated the meeting upon the great success which had crowned the proceedings of the Conference. Mr. Gladstone had done much for them from time to time; and he hoped that he would not turn a deaf ear to their present demands. If he would grant them their wishes, he would no doubt lose the support of some few of his half-hearted followers; but the Liberal party would certainly gain in warmth and enthusiasm. The Welsh had been called "a nation of Nonconformists," and they were proud of the name. But as Nonconformists, they had not hitherto made their voices heard, nor had they carried the influence which they ought to have carried. They had, as far as he knew, among the Welsh members of Parliament but three Nonconformists only. True, they had men such as Osborne Morgan and Watkin Williams, who were almost as good as Nonconformists; but on the other hand, there were among the Welsh Liberal members gentlemen who on all questions relating to the interests of Wales were altogether opposed to the Welsh people, and who would move neither hand nor foot to secure for them the measures for which they as a nation were calling. In every county and in every borough in Wales, the Nonconformists were greatly in the majority. They were soon to have the ballot, and then it would be their own fault if they failed

to send up to Parliament gentlemen who cherished the same convictions, advocated the same measures, and professed the same principles as themselves.

The Rev. Dr. WM. REES, Liverpool, who spoke in Welsh, moved the following resolution :—

"That, in the judgment of this meeting, the time has come for the Nonconformist adherents of the Liberal cause in this country, and especially in the Principality of Wales, to insist on a thorough and consistent application of the principles of religious equality in the public policy of the leaders of their party."

He said the resolution referred to religious equality. It was a shame that anything need be said on such a subject. Was not every man equal with another in his relation to God? And has any man or any class of men a right to interfere in the least degree with the rights which belong to man as a creature endowed with conscience? We should pity those who placed a pressure upon men's consciences. Some said that thorough religious equality was not obtainable until England became convinced of the necessity of disestablishment; the people of Wales had been convinced of that at least a hundred years since. The union of Church and State is so damaging to both that hardly ever can either of them do the thing that it would. They are constantly found contrary the one to the other. The only way to deal with them is—let them be separated.

The Rev. Professor MORGAN (Carmarthen), who also spoke in Welsh, seconded the resolution. He said: I rise, Mr. Chairman, at your request, to second the resolution that has been so ably proposed by my esteemed friend Dr. Rees, Liverpool. In doing so, I beg to state that if I rightly interpret the feeling of this meeting, we want our senators to give us religious equality, which implies two things. First: That they must repeal some existing laws; and, secondly, that they must take care not to favour sectarianism in any future laws. I shall confine myself to the former, namely, that some existing laws must be repealed, or in other words, that we must get a dissolution of Church and State. I am aware that the union of Church and State is not of yesterday's date. Let me use a comparison, the Establishment is a tree that has taken upwards of fifteen centuries to grow, and during that long period

has spread its branches far and wide. Some of our statesmen have, from time to time, lopped off some of the branches, in order to improve the appearance of the tree, and to make the fruit on the remaining branches more efficacious for the healing of the nations. One statesman proposed to get the Catholic Emancipation branch off in order to improve the tree. Another statesman proposed to get the Test and Corporation branch off and the tree would be decidedly improved by doing so. Another statesman proposed to get the Jewish Disability branch off in order to improve the tree. Another statesman proposed to get the Church Rate branch off. Another statesman proposed to do away with the religious tests in our universities. And we have now a large number of statesmen who are anxious to carry on the lopping system still further. But the junior member for Bradford addresses his fellow-senators by saying,—"leave the branches alone, we must uproot the tree." Mr. Miall evidently understands the philosophy of the matter, because the greater the number of branches the less the difficulty of uprooting the tree. It is quite evident that there is life still in the tree. The 25th clause in the late Education Act, a new branch which sprung out of the old tree last spring, is a proof that there is still vitality in the trunk. Our Tory legislators say, and I am sorry to add many of our semi-Liberals unite with them in saying,—we have given you the Toleration Act. What! liberty to worship God according to the dictates of our consciences! If you had framed a law to give us liberty to see, such a law would be an insult to our sensitive nature, because God has given us eyes and light. If you had framed a law to give us liberty to breathe, such a law would be an insult to our physical constitutions, because God has given us lungs and air. And for you to say that you have given us liberty to worship is an insult to our moral constitutions because God has given us truth and conscience, and we hold ourselves responsible to Him alone for the use we make of both. Again the same party say,—we have given you Catholic Emancipation; we reply that we want more. They also say we have abolishd Church-rates for your sake; our reply is still we must have more. We have thrown open the universities for your sons; we reply we must have more. And they conclude by

saying, we have given you disestablishment and disendowment in Ireland, and end with an air of triumph, by asking what more do you want? we reply that we must get the same in this country. This, Mr. Chairman, is our demand, and with this demand we approach our senators. Not cap in hand, not with a faltering step; but boldly and courageously. They may for a time turn a deaf ear, but we are sure to prevail. Our plea is not for charity; we sue not for mercy, but we demand justice. We ask nothing more, and we shall be satisfied with nothing less.

Mr. EVAN M. RICHARDS, M.P. for Cardiganshire, who spoke in English, in supporting the resolution, said that whatever faults there were in the Education Bill, and particularly in the 25th clause, there could be no doubt that these were not due to, but were there in spite of, Welshmen. However, he was sanguine enough to hope that the demonstrations that had taken place within the last few days would have no little weight in inducing the Government to reconsider this measure. Welshmen were sometimes charged with being a very vainglorious people; but if any people in Her Majesty's dominions had a right to ask their representatives to "insist on a thorough and consistent application of the principles of religious equality in the public policy of the leader of their party," it was the Welsh. (Cheers.) From Anglesey down to Cardiff Welsh people had made sacrifices for religious equality, and they had a right to ask their representatives to insist upon their leaders carrying out the principles that he and others were sent to support in the House of Commons. (Cheers.) It had always been to him a surprise that Welshmen, who were always so ready to make sacrifices, had not gone a little further, and insisted that the Liberal questions should be dealt with by men who could sympathise with them in their views, and men who could to some extent express these views in the House. They made a great stride at the last election, and he hoped the result of the Conference in Manchester would be to send into Wales a voice that would be heard throughout the whole land, and that men would be induced to carry out the resolutions passed at the Conference, not only in the letter but in the spirit. (Cheers.)

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Rev. ROGER EDWARDS, Mold, who spoke in Welsh, moved:

"That the system of subsidising religious denominations in the business of public education, which has unhappily been favoured and strengthened by the present Government, is deserving of condemnation, as being unsound in principle, unfair in its working, and injurious in its effects to the interests of the nation."

Mr. HENRY RICHARD, M.P., after a short introduction in Welsh, said the particular question that had been occupying the attention of the Conference during the last three days had essential reference to the Education Act of 1869, and there was no part of the United Kingdom where it was more necessary to watch jealously the operation of that act than in the principality of Wales. The moral and religious history of Wales might be compressed into a few sentences. After the Reformation the people were abandoned to utter ignorance, superstition, and barbarism, by those who professedly were in charge of their spiritual interests. God then raised up men whose souls were on fire in contemplating the misery of their country, and they went forth and aroused the people out of a slumber of ages, and found these men entirely indifferent to their fate. (Hear, hear.) They then determined that if no one else would take care of their souls they would do so themselves, and set about the work of building chapels, establishing schools, and providing for themselves out of their deep poverty the most perfect machinery of religious worship and instruction that was to be found in any part of the United Kingdom or the world. When the Nonconformists had evangelised and enlightened the country, then the clergymen of the Church of England began to awake out of their sleep, and to rub their eyes, and to look around them. (Cheers.) Many in the room would remember that race of Welsh parsons. They were like the old clergyman of whom he heard in England, who, in reply to the remark of his churchwarden that the congregation were all going over to the Methodists, asked if the tithes were going over too. (Laughter and cheers.) There was rising in Wales another generation of clergymen who did not look upon the matter with such indifference. They had been shamed into something like interest and activity in regard to the Bible, and seeing that the great mass of the adult population had been taken away from them and gathered into the Nonconformist churches and chapels, they had set them-

selves studiously and systematically to try to get hold of the children. Therefore, about thirty years ago, they began with great activity, and by the aid largely of money obtained from the Government, and in many cases obtained under false pretences to establish day schools, into which they gathered the children of the Dissenters, because there were no others within reach, and there they did all they could by forcing the children to learn the catechism and go into church on Sundays to become Churchmen. He was thankful to say that up to this time they had utterly failed in their devices. (Cheers.) Now they were doing the same thing, and the Government was playing into their hands. (Hear, hear.) They, as inhabitants and natives of the Principality, had a right to stand by with erect attitude and an open brow in the presence of the Government and say, looking at our country, "Whatever has been done in its spiritual cultivation has been done by us. (Hear, hear.) It is we, out of our own voluntary exertions, that have evangelised and civilised Wales; we have given to Wales not only its religion and its education, but its literature; and therefore we protest against a system which puts a large amount of public money, drawn from our pockets, into the hands of men who are trying to pervert our children from the religion of their fathers." He asked the meeting to come firmly and broadly to the only ground which they as Nonconformists could consistently occupy. One of two things they must have—either secular or sectarian schools. He did not believe in what was called undenominational religion. If he were to become a teacher of religion again, as he had been for twenty years, he should object to be prohibited from expressing the whole of his convictions upon that most important of all subjects, and should say, "No, if I am to teach religion according to my convictions, I must do it unfettered." (Cheers.) But he had no fear that the children of Wales would be neglected as to their religious education, although it was not given in day schools. (Hear, hear.) They, as Nonconformists, had never asked for any power, or privilege, or advantage of any kind to themselves. All that they asked was to be placed upon a perfect civil, political, and social equality in the eye of the law. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. THOMAS GEE, Mayor of Denbigh, said he was delighted with

the strong healthy tone which pervaded all the discussions of the Conference, and which he considered to be a credit to the Nonconformity of this country. They appeared also to be perfectly unanimous upon the great question which had called them together. During the progress of the Education Bill through Parliament, although all were agreed as to the advisability of excluding all catechisms from our public elementary schools, some of their friends hesitated as to the propriety of excluding the Bible also; but this feeling did not arise from a fear that the Christianity of this kingdom had not sufficient life in it to take care of the religious education of the children, nor from a fear that the churches were not prepared to undertake the task, neither did it arise from a fear that the work would not be much better performed by them than by the public schoolmasters, but it arose from their being unwilling to expose themselves to the charge of excluding the Bible from the day schools. By this time however, they were all agreed upon this point, and he was delighted to find that the Birmingham Education League also had moved forward and taken its stand upon the only safe ground in connection with this question. (Hear.) In Wales they also had a Conference a few weeks ago at Aberystwyth, and that was the position which they had taken. (Hear.) From the tone which pervaded the addresses which he had heard at that (the Manchester) Conference, from the universal condemnation which the 25th clause of the last Education Bill had received by the general body of Nonconformists, as well as from the determination which appeared to pervade many districts, that the Education rate should not be paid if it was applied to denominational purposes, he felt convinced that its knell had been sounded, and that we should soon see it buried amongst the absurd attempts which had been made by the Government of this country to endow religion. (Cheers.) One gentleman had already suffered, and he knew there were others in the principality who were prepared to follow his example. (Hear.) It had been stated in one of the meetings of the Conference that Government had decided upon annulling this objectionable clause, and that it was intended to increase the Parliamentary grant to denominational schools. What grounds there were for such a statement he could not say; but he would not be surprised to find that Mr. Forster by this time was able to see that a storm was brewing,

and that ultimately Mr. Gladstone would find that the opposition of the Nonconformists was too strong for any government to withstand. (Cheers.) But if this clause was annulled, he feared that if it were done upon the conditions which he had named, they were only upon the threshold of their difficulties; and there were two reasons which confirmed him in this view. In the first place, the removal of the payments from the school rate to the consolidated fund would materially increase the difficulty which ratepayers would feel in practically opposing a school rate when it applied to denominational purposes by refusing to pay but by the assistance of the auctioneer. (Hear, hear.) If removed to the consolidated fund, the rate would form a part of the imperial taxes, and could not be opposed by itself in the way to which he had alluded; but however great our difficulties may be they must be surmounted. (Hear.) That Mr. Forster and the Education Department are determined to prop up and firmly establish, if possible, the denominational system at any cost, may be inferred from the fact that the Parliamentary grant to denominational schools has been increased fifty per cent with the view of enabling the denominational schools to stand their ground, and compete successfully with the Board schools, and he should not be surprised to find that a farther step in the same direction will be made, if Mr. Forster thinks he dare make the attempt. Mr. Gee then reviewed at some length the history of the Education Department during the time when Mr. Lowe and Mr. Bruce were vice-presidents; and, after referring to several facts, stated that the Dissenters of the Principality had had no confidence whatever in this department for some years, that although a great majority of the people were Nonconformists, and the members of the Nonconformist congregations formed the class from which children were brought to our elementary public schools, yet that whenever a district ascertained that the Church was likely to make an application for a national school, their previous intention to make an application for a grant towards the erection of a British school was laid aside, as they knew they would have no chance if opposed by the Church. (Shame.) Mr. Gee then referred to one case which was known throughout the Principality, and for which Mr. Bruce was accountable, and this with other things was among the reasons why

he lost his seat at Merthyr, and was obliged to appeal to a constituency in Scotland for a seat in Parliament. (Hear.) It was a significant fact, and one which they ought to bear in mind with respect to these gentlemen as well as Mr. Forster, that though they were statesmen of whose ability there could be no doubt, and whose liberal views upon other questions were admitted by all, yet when they entered the Education Department their sympathies with the Nonconformists—who were acknowledged to be amongst the most faithful supporters of a Liberal Government—very soon cooled down. (Hear, hear.) From this fact he thought it was clear that they should not rest satisfied with having good and just laws passed, but that they should also see that these laws were administered by a department upon which they could rely. (Hear, hear.) Their task would, therefore, not be finished until the Education Department had been thoroughly ventilated and new blood introduced into it, which would not, at least, be prejudiced against Dissent, even if we could not secure therein a hearty sympathy with our principles and objects. (Cheers.) Mr. Gee then referred, in confirmation of this view, to the Commissioners who had been appointed under the Endowed Schools Act; to the fact that 36 out of 40 of the schemes for the Endowed Schools contained a clergyman as an *ex officio* member of the governing body, although such was directly opposed both to the letter and spirit of the Act. (Hear.) He also referred to the almost entire absence of Dissenters amongst the inspectors of schools—to the appointment of Mr. Kynnersley and others, who were Churchmen, to visit Dissenting districts in Wales and who made their visits subservient to the interests of the Church, and insulting to Dissenters. (Cries of "Shame.") These, and other facts, which Mr. Gee named, clearly proved to him that the Education Department should be thoroughly reformed before the Nonconformists of this country could expect to be treated by that department upon a footing of equality with the members of the Established Church. (Hear.) Now, what had Mr. Forster done in the face of these grievances? Has he discharged, or even suspended, any of these officers, either for their incompetency or for their unworthy conduct? If he had not done so, and which he believed to be the case, he must be held responsible for their conduct and actions, and the head of the Government

should be informed that we are dissatisfied with the manner in which the business of the department is conducted. (Cheers.) Mr. Gee concluded by calling particular attention to the importance of being prepared at all points for the coming struggle. The principles and privileges which they felt the greatest respect for were most likely in greater danger now than they had been for many years; and if the Nonconformists of the United Kingdom, and the members of the great Liberal party who sympathised with them did not stand out boldly and resolutely in defence of them, the time was not far distant when Austria and France, and even Spain and Italy—the most Catholic countries in the world—who were now making a determined effort to rid themselves of the iron yoke of the Papacy, would look down upon Great Britain with feelings of pity and even contempt. (Cheers.)

The resolution was further supported by Mr. John Griffiths, of London.

The motion was then put and carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN then vacated the chair, which was taken by the Rev. W. James, B.A.

Mr. Councillor J. F. ROBERTS proposed and the Rev. MR. MORGAN, Manchester, seconded a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was unanimously agreed to. The meeting then separated.

LIST OF DELEGATES.

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Abbot, E.	... Nonconformist Committee, Ripley
Ainsworth, W. H. ...	... Nonconformists of Blackburn
Abbot, James	... Baptist Church, Grosvenor-street, Manchester
Abbott, William ...	... Bolton Congregational Church
Abercrombie, Rev. R. E.	... United Methodist Free Church, Hebden Bridge
Abercrombie, Rev. Ralph, M.A.	... United Methodist Free Church, Cardiff
Abram, W. A.	... Park Congregational Church, Blackburn
Adamson, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Dobcross
Adam, Mr. Jos.... ...	... Chris. Chapel, 116, Grosvenor-st., C.-on-Medlock
Adams, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Daventry
Adams, Harvey... ...	... Fenton Nonconformists
Adams, James	... Every-street Baptist Church, Ancoats
Adshead, G. H.... ...	... Independent Chapel, Pendleton
Ainsworth, Hargreaves ...	... Lancaster Road Congregational Church, Preston
Alcorn, R.	... Baptist Church, Woodgate, Loughborough
Aldis, Rev. John, junior...	.. Baptist Church, Salem Chapel, Hitchin
Alcorn, Rev. J.... ...	... Baptist Church, Woodgate, Loughborough
Alford, Rev. J. D. ...	... Circus Baptist Chapel, Bradford-st., Birmingham
Allatt, James	... Congregational Church, Newton-le-Willows
Allen, Rev. George John	... Congregational Church, Townley-st., Macclesfield
Allon, Rev. Henry, D.D.	... Congregational Church, Islington
Allen, Rev. W. H. ...	.. Enon Baptist Church, Burnley
Allen, John F.	... Congregational Church, Peasley Cross, St. Helens
Allen, Stafford	... London Educational Committee
Allwood, John	... Nonconformist Committee, Stafford
Allot, Alfred	... Nether Chapel, Sheffield
Almond, William ...	... Congregational Church, Market-street, Farnworth
Andrew, George ...	... Abney Chapel, Mossley
Andrew, John	... First Baptist Church, South Parade, Leeds
Anderson, Rev. George ...	... Leicester and Rutland County Union
Andrews, Rev. James A.	... Congregational Church, Clayton
Anderson, Rev. Alexander, B.A.	... Congregational Church, Stand
Alliot, J. B.	... Nonconformist Committee, Nottingham

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Ann, Rev. Robert ...	... South Staffordshire Congregational Union
Anson, Rev. W. C. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Cottenham
Anthony, Professor F. E., M.A.	... Nonconformist Committee and Norley Congregational Church, Plymouth
Anthony, Rev. T., B.A....	... Congregational Ch., Moseley Road, Birmingham
Archer, Rev. William E...	... Baptist Church, Sutton-in-Craven
Archer, John	... Nonconformist Meeting of Tutbury
Armitage, William ...	... Grosvenor-street Chapel, Piccadilly, Manchester
Armitage, Ziba	... Wycliffe Congregational Church, Warrington
Armitage, Benjamin ...	.. Congregational Church, Eccles
Arnold, Rev. T.... ...	... Doddridge Chapel, Northampton
Armstrong, Rev. Richard A., B.A.,	Nottingham Nonconformist Committee and North Midland Presbyterian and Unitarian Assocn.
Armour, Alexr. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool
Armitage, Elkanah ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Ashby, W.	... Friars-street Chapel, Leicester
Ashton, James	... Congregational Church, Hyde
Ashburn, H.	... Montagu-street Congregational Church, Blackburn
Ashton, R. S.	... Belgrave Congregational Church and North-east Lancashire Nonconformist Assocn., Darwen
Ashcroft, Rev. R. ...	... Congregational Church, Rock Ferry
Ashwell, Henry... ...	... Derby Road Baptist Chapel, Nottingham
Ashwell, Thomas ...	... „ „ „
Ashworth, James ...	... Young Men's Auxiliary Lib. Society, Rochdale
Ashworth, John ...	... „ „ „
Ashworth, Rev. Abraham	... Beamly Reform Club
Ashworth, James ...	... „ „
Ashworth, John ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Haslingden
Ashyed, Councillor F. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Ashworth, Abel... ...	... Auxiliary of Liberation Society, Heywood
Aitken, Rev. David ..	.. Congregational Church, Tideswell
Ashworth, Edmund ...	... Charlestown Congregational Church, Manchester
Atkinson, Thomas ...	... Ebenezer Chapel, Leyland
Ashworth, Robert ...	... Congregational Church, Sale
Askew, Rev. Edwin ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Whitehaven
Aspinall, William ...	... Millgate Baptist Chapel, Rochdale
Asquith, Joshua ...	... Rehoboth Chapel, Morley
Astbury, Rev. M. G. ...	... Nonconformist Com., Halesowen, Birmingham
Atherton, Mr.	... Lees Methodist New Connexion
Atkinson, H. C. ...	... Bethel Baptist Chapel, Barnes-street, Accrington
Aylard, Rev. Charles ...	... Bowdon District of Cheshire Union
Axford, Rev. William ...	... Peasley Cross Congregational Church, St. Helens
Axon, Jabez	... Ryecroft Cong. Church, Ashton-under-Lyne
Barrow, Isaac	... Bank-street Unitarian Church, Bolton
Barker, Rev. John ...	... Baptist Chapel, Lockwood, Huddersfield
Barrow, Thomas ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Lancaster
Baines, William ...	... Oxford-street Chapel, Leicester
Banks, T. Lewis ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Stratford
Bantock, Alderman Thomas	... Nonconformist Committee, Wolverhampton
Batten, Joseph	... Liberation Society, Wakefield
Bateman, John... ...	... Board of Nonconformist Evan. Mins., Leicester

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Baxter, John	... Norwood Chapel, Liverpool
Barcroft, Henry ...	... Baptist Chapel, Waterbarn, Manchester
Baines, Alderman J. P. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Barnes, David	... Gorton Baptist Chapel, Manchester
Barton, Rev. S. S. ...	... Methodist Free Church, Oxford-st., Manchester
Barnes, Thomas ...	... Salop Association
Balieff, John M. ...	... Congregational Church, Eccles
Bayley, Rev. Richard H.	... Baptist Chapel, King-street, Oldham
Batty, Rev. Thomas. ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Colchester
Baron, John	... United Methodist Free Churches, Burnley
Barker, William ...	... Bramley Free Church
Baguley, Samuel ...	... Independent Church, Droylsden
Bailey, Thomas... ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Ramsbottom
Bailey, Rev. Edward ...	... Liverpool and Northwich District of United Methodist Free Churches
Banks, Rev. Henry ...	... Congregational Church, Hindley
Bamber, Rev. John ...	... Baptist Chapel, Wainsgate, Yorkshire
Baker, Rev. Thomas ...	... Baptist Chapel, Darwen
Barbour, J. Morton ...	... Sion Chapel, Halifax
Barr, William Roby ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Stockport
Barmby, Goodwyn ...	... "The Band of Faith," Wakefield
Barrett, Rev. G. S., B.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Norwich
Barnes, Rev. Frederick, B.A.	... Congregational Church, Oxton Road, Birkenhead
Baskerville, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Knutsford
Bamford, J. W. ...	... Rochdale
Bateman, Thomas S. ...	... Society of Primitive Methodists, Ashton-u.-Lyne
Bawden, Rev. J. Q. ...	... Methodist New Connexion Church, ,,
Barker, W. H.	...
Baxter, Rev. E. J. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Hanley
Bayley, Thomas ...	... Public Unsectarian Schools, Nottingham
Best, Rev. Robert ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Bolton
Beads, James	... United Methodist Free Ch., Barton-st., Blackburn
Bennett, Matthew ...	... Walken Circuit, Primitive Methodists
Bennett, Thomas ...	... Barnoldswick Baptist Church
Bennett, Rev.	... Nonconformist Union, Canterbury
Beeley, Thomas ...	... Primitive Methodist Chapel, Newton Moor
Beith, J. A.	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Best, John G.	... Liberation Society, Bradford
Bell, James P.	... Congregational Church, Barrow-in-Furness
Bell, David	... Gt. George-st. Congregational Church, Liverpool
Best, Rev. William ...	... Baptist Association of Yorkshire
Bevan, Rev. Llewellyn D.	... Congregational Board of Ministers, London
Bennett, William ...	... Independent Church, Hollingworth
Bell, William...	.. Congregational Association, Notts
Beeby, William Marden...	... North Staffordshire Congregational Union and Cong. Church, Newcastle-under-Lyne
Bellan, Thomas... ...	... Mount Pleasant United Presbyterian Church, Liverpool
Bedell, Alexander ...	... Congregation Church, Wilmslow
Bedell, Rev. James ...	... Congregational Church, Oldham Road, Manchester
Benham, James ...	... Baptist Union

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Benson, William ...	... Baptist Church, Macclesfield
Bentley, Jos.	... Stand Lane Independent Chapel, Radcliffe
Berry, Samuel	... Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham
Berry, James	... Bethesda Chapel, Burnley
Bertram, Rev. R. A. ...	... North Devon Congregational Union
Bertenshaw, Jos. ...	... Dukinfield Hall Nonconformist Chapel
Beswick, Samuel ...	... Green Mount Congregational Church, Tottington
Betts, Rev. H. J. ...	... Baptist Church, Grosvenor-street, Manchester
Bevan, Edward ...	... Grange Lane Baptist Church, Birkenhead
Bew, T. C.	... United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Bickerstaff, Thomas ...	... Presbyterian Congregation, and Lancaster Nonconformists, Lancaster
Billingham, Henry. ...	... Worcester County Congregational Association and Stourbridge Nonconformist Committee
Bindley, S. A.	... Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham
Binns, Rev. William ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Birkenhead
Binnall, Henry	... Primitive Methodist, Tunstall
Birch, William, jun. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Birkett, John	... Baptist Chapel, Stockport
Black, Rev. James, M.A.	. . Unitarian Church, Stockport
Blackwell, John ...	... College-street, Northampton, and Suffolk and Norfolk Association
Bland, Rev. Samuel King	.. Baptist Chapel, Beccles, Suffolk
Blandford, Rev. Thomas	... Congregational Association, Kent and Canterbury
Blazeby, Rev. William, B.A.	... Unitarian Church, Rotherham
Booth, Thomas ...	... United Meth. Free Church, Castlemere, Rochdale
Boaden, Rev. Ed. ...	... Committee of United Methodist Free Churches, Haslingden
Bodley, E. F.	... Nonconformist Committee, Hanley
Bowden, Rev. J. D. ...	... United Presbyterian Ch., Prince's Road, L'pool.
Boddington, Timothy ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Manchester
Boyd, Alexander ...	... Congregational Church, Cheadle-Hulme
Bowdler, Richard ...	... James-street Chapel, Blackburn
Blackburn, Rev. F. Close	... Congregational Church, Tipton
Blacknell, Samuel N. ...	... Hanover Chapel, Stockport
Bostock, T., jun. ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Pendleton
Booth, Rev. Samuel H. ...	... Baptist Assocn. London and Upper Holloway Chapel
Boyd, Joseph	... Congregational Church, Rose Hill, Bolton
Boyd, James	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Bowdler, William Henry	... Zion Chapel, Kirkham
Booth, Hugh	... Congregational Church, Ashley Lane, Manchester
Booth, Rev. T. M. ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Burton
Booth, George	... Congregational Church, Ashley Lane, Manchester
Booth, J.	... Bury Nonconformists
Boothroyd, Alderman Samuel	... West End Congregational Church, Southport
Bostock, Benjamin J. ...	... Cheshire Congregational Union
Bostock, Mr. George ...	... Congregational Church, Middlewich
Bowser, J. C.	... Abbey Road Church, St. John's Wood, London
Bottomley, George ...	... Congregational Church, Victoria-street, Derby
Bottomley, Wm. R. ...	.. Primitive Methodists, Ramsbottom
Bottomley, William ...	... Abney Congregational Church, Mossley

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Boyden, Rev. William ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Ripley
Bragg, John	... Montague-st. Congregational Church, Blackburn
Bradbury, Abel ...	... Congregational Church, Stockport Road, M'chester
Brear, William ...	... Sion Chapel, Halifax
Brewster, Rev. Colin ...	.. Congregational Church, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool
Bryant, Jesse	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Brierley, John	... Congregational Church, Stand
Briggs, E. Ashworth ...	... Congregational Chapel, Daventry
Brice, R., jun.	... Baptist College, Northampton
Briggs, Henry	... Baptist Chapel, Millwood, Todmorden
Bray, Rev. A. J. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Bright, Rev. Charles ...	... Baptist Chapel, Church
Brook, J. C., jun. ...	... Ossett, Wakefield
Brooks, Rev. Thomas ...	... Baptist Chapel, Wallingford
Brown, Rev. E.... ...	... Inskip Nonconformists
Brown, Rev. S. B. ...	... Romsey Baptist Church
Brown, Rev. H. S. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, and Myrtle-st. Baptist Chapel, Liverpool
Brown, Alfred	... Myrtle-street Baptist Chapel, Liverpool
Brown, George ...	... Aberdeen Auxiliary Liberation Society
Brown, Rev. G. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Eccles
Brown, Rev. J. T. ...	... Baptist College, Northampton
Browne, Rev. James, B.A.	... Congregational Church, Barnsley
Browning, Rev. E. ...	... United Meth. Free Church, Circuit of Clitheroe
Brown, George... ...	... Congregational Church, Belper
Brown, Bateman ...	... Trinity Congregational Church, Huntingdon
Bradshaw, Joseph ...	... Congregational Church, Duke's Alley, Bolton
Brown, William ...	... Essex Congregational Union
Bryson, James ...	... E. U. Church, Harpurhey, Manchester
Burnley, John	... Salem Chapel, Methodist New Connexion, Strangeways, Manchester
Bradshaw, J. J. ...	... Unitarian Congregation, Commission-st., Bolton
Briggs, Isaac	... Zion Chapel, Wakefield
Bruce, Rev. Robert, M.A.	... United Nonconformists, Huddersfield
Brown, Rev. John ...	... Nonconformist Association, Bedford
Butler, Edward ...	... Association of Congregational Churches, Leeds
Broadbent, James ...	... Methodist New Connexion Chapel, Mossley
Broughton, Thomas ...	... Baptist Chapel, Blackburn Road, Accrington
Brownlow, George ...	... Rusholme Road Cong. Church, Manchester
Bradbury, William Hy.	... Methodist Free Church, Openshaw
Brown, Rev. F. B. ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Wrexham
Brown, Rev. John Jenkyn	... Midland Baptist Association
Bradley, George ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Wrexham
Bryning, Ed.	... Canon-street Chapel, Preston
Britcliffe, Rev. Francis ...	... Baptist Chapel, Skipton
Brownson, George ...	... Union-street Chapel, Hyde
Bruckshaw, William ...	... Congregational Church, Maudsley-street, Bolton
Byles, Rev. John ...	... James-street Chapel, Blackburn
Burley, William ..	... Nonconformists, Theberton, Suffolk
Burrows, A.	... Atherton Nonconformists
Bugby, Rev. F. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Burgass, William ...	... Albion Chapel, Sneinton
Burgess, William ...	... Nantwich District, Cheshire Union
Burn, Samuel	.. Baptist Church, Oakes, Lindley
Burnley, George ...	.. Upper Chapel, Heckmondwike
Burton, Mr. James ...	... Baptist Church, Accrington
Burrows, John B. ...	... Russell-street Chapel, United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Bury, Rev. James ...	... Baptist Church, Colne, and Craven District Association
Byles, Rev. A. Holden, B.A.	... Congregational Church, Headingley
Buckley, Robert S. ...	... Methodist New Connexion Chapel, Mossley
Buckley, Abraham ...	... Congregational Church, Union-street, Oldham
Buckley, William Miller	... Claremont Baptist Church, Bolton
Buck, Richard	... Stanley Chapel, Liverpool
Burden, Edward ...	... Congregational Church, Gt. George-st., Liverpool
Burge, Mr.	... Independent Church, Gainsborough
Carter, Rev. Thomas ...	... Meeting of Unitarian Ministers in and around Manchester
Cadman, Rev. W. G. ..	.. Dob Lane Chapel, Failsworth
Cantrell, Rev. E. W. ...	... Baptist Church, Wellington Road, Todmorden
Candlish John, M.P. ...	... Nonconformists of Sunderland
Carryer, Samuel ...	... Baptist Church, Burslem
Carryer, John Yates ...	... Nonconformists of Stone, Staffordshire
Catterall, Robert ...	... Nonconformists of Kirkham
Calverley, John ...	... Nonconformists of Wakefield
Carver, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Marple
Cain, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Stubbins
Caine, N., J.P.... ...	... Myrtle-street Baptist Chapel, Liverpool
Calvert, Rev. John ..	... Zion Church, Attercliffe
Calvert, James ...	... Congregational Church, Belper
Carrington, S. R. ...	... Hanover Independent Church, Stockport
Campbell, David ...	... Congregational Church, Chapel-street, Blackburn
Carter, Rev. Frederick ...	... Park Chapel, Congregational
Catterall, John... ...	... Baptist Church, Inskip
Chadwick, Rev. John ...	... Nonconformists of Malton
Chadwick, S. L. ...	... Failsworth Congregational School
Chamberlain, Joseph ...	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Chappell, John... ...	... Nonconformists of Calne
Charlton, Samuel ...	... Chapel-street Congregational Church, Salford
Charles, Rev. David ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Cardiganshire
Chater, Rev. John ...	.. West End Congregational Church, Southport
Chambers, Rev. William	... Branch Education League, Newcastle-under-Lyne
Chapman, Henry Thomas	... United Methodist Free Church, Openshaw
Cheetham, Charles, J.P.	... United Methodist Free Church, Heywood
Chambers, Henry Thomas	... Congregational Union of Leicester and Rutland
Chew, Rev. R.	... Newcastle-upon-Tyne Dist. of U. M. F. Churches
Champness, Rev. William	... Chapel-street Chapel, Wem
Chenery, Rev. Richard ...	... Moss Side Baptist Association, Manchester
Chippendale, Richard ...	... Independent Church, Great Harwood
Chisholm, Rev. J. W. ...	... Blackburn Circuit Methodist Free Church
Clulow, John Walter ...	... Nonconformists of Brierley Hill

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Cliff, Eaton	... Congregational Church, Northwich
Clarkson, Rev. William F., B.A.	... Cong. Union of Lincolnshire and Newland Church
Clark, Rev. James William	... Congregational Church, Ulverstone
Clayden, Rev. P. W. ...	... Visitor
Clegg, Thomas	... Congregational Church, West Cliff, Whitby
Clark, Rev. Thomas ...	... Baptist Church, Market Drayton
Clarkson, Rev. S. ...	... Congregational Church, Lytham
Clarke, James	... U. M. F. Churches, Castlemere, Rochdale
Clarke, Rev. Charles ...	... Warwickshire Congregational Ministers
Clark, William ...	... Nonconformist Association, Nottingham
Cleave, Rev. James ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Wakefield
Clarke, James	... Congregational Church, Clapham
Clarkson, Richard ...	... Nonconformist Association, Dewsbury
Clarkson, William ...	... Congregational Church, Endless-street, Salisbury
Clarke, Rev. A. ..	... Wellington Road Con. Church, Stockport
Clay, John	... Branch of Education League, Halifax
Clemance, Rev. Clement, B.A.	... Castlegate Congregational Church, Nottingham
Clegg, George... ...	... Congregational Church, Stubbins, Bury
Colville, Rev. John ...	... Independent Church, Holmfirth
Cooke, Bancroft ...	... Unitarian Church, Birkenhead
Common, Andrew, J.P....	... Nonconformists, Sunderland
Conder, Rev. E. R., M.A.	... Leeds Association of Congregational Churches
Conder, Rev. George W.	... Queen's Road Congregational Church, London
Codde, Thomas G. ...	... Congregational Church, Greenheys, Manchester
Cook, Robert Hyatt ...	... Congregational Church, Hadleigh, Suffolk
Collings, Councillor Jesse	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Collinge, James ...	... Baptist Church, Grosvenor-street, Manchester
Corbett, Rev. Joseph ...	... Un. Presbyterian Ch., Coupland-st., Manchester
Cooper, Rev. J. T. ...	... Congregational Church, Buxton
Cooke, John R. ...	... Nonconformists of Hanley
Cooke, Rev. Alfred ...	... Congregational Church, Sedgeley
Cox, J. Charles... ..	... Nonconformists of Derby
Cory, R., jun.	... Tredegeville Chapel, Cardiff
Cowpe, Emanuel ...	... Baptist Chapel, Buly Road, Haslingden
Collier, Rev. Francis G.	... Nonconformist Association, Wigan
Coleman, John	... Miles Platting United Free Church, Manchester
Cook, Michael	.. Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Baptist Union
Cooksey, Joseph, F.G.S.	... Nonconformist Association, and Congregational Church, Mayer's Green, West Bromwich
Collier, Edward ...	.. Baptist Chapel, Ashton
Compston, Rev. John ...	... Baptist Chapel, York Road, Leeds
Collier, William ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Cook, John	... Yorkshire Association Baptist Chapels
Cook, John	... Eastern Division of Suffolk Congregational Union
Coombs, James, M.D. ..	... Trustees of Bedford Schools
Coop, Timothy	.. Christian Brethren, Southport
Cooper, William ...	... Tunstall Education League
Cowen, Joseph, jun. ..	... Nonconformist Committee, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Comfort, E. S.	... Zion Congregational Chapel, Hyde
Cookson, John Ince ...	... Chapel-street Congregational Chapel, Salford
Conway, J. H.	... Carleon Branch of Education League

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Cox, Edwin	.. New Congregational Chapel, Preston
Cocker, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Stoke
Cox, George	... Bath Nonconformist Meeting
Cockshott, Robert ...	... Congregational Church, Skipton
Cocking, George ...	... Congregational Church, Ludlow
Compston, S.	... Congregational Church, Radcliffe
Cowan, Henry	...
Cowan, Rev. David R. ...	... Saltaire Congregational Church
Corbishley, James ...	... Tabernacle, Stockport
Conling, Rev. Samuel ...	... Baptist Church, Oakengates, Salop
Cook, Edward	... Congregational Union, Essex
Coulson, W. W. ..	...
Cowie, A. H.	... Oxton Road Congregational Church, Birkenhead
Crabtree, Jonas	.. Congregational Church, Kidderminster
Craven, Josh., jun. ...	.. Kipping Congregation
Craven, David	... Kipping Independent Church
Craven, Joseph ...	.. Congregational Church, Clapham
Cropper, Henry S. ...	... Albin Congregational Church
Crothers, Rev. Thomas D.	... Methodist New Con., South-street, Sheffield
Crosfield, William. J.P...	... Liverpool Nonconformist Committee; and Great George-street Congregational Chapel
Crosfield, W., jun. ..	... Gt. George-st. Congregational Chapel, Liverpool
Crook, John	... Lancaster Road Chapel, Preston
Crook, John	.. Baptist Church, Inskip
Crook, John, jun. ...	... Baptist Church, Inskip
Crossley, David... ...	... Duke's Alley Chapel, Bolton
Craig, Rev. Robert, M.A.	... Association of Indpt. Denominations, Scotland
Cran, Rev. Alexander, M.A.	... Congregational Church, Droylsden
Cripps, John	... Baptist Chapel, Myrtle-street, Liverpool
Crighton, William ...	... Rusholme Road Chapel, Manchester
Crosskey, Rev. Henry W., F.G.S.	Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Crossfield, John H. ...	... Methodist Free Church, Openshaw
Cropper, Rev. John, A.M.	. . Monton Chapel, Eccles
Crawshaw, Thomas ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Ossett
Cross, John	... Nonconformist Committee, Wigan
Crowther, Alderman A.	... Baptist Association of Yorkshire
Croft, Rev. Charles ...	... Salop Ministers' Asso., & Abbey Forgate Con. Ch.
Croft, Henry Only, D.D.	... Methodist New Connex. Ch. Hulme, Manchester
Crickett, S. B.	. . Cavendish-st. Congregational Ch., Manchester
Cubitt, William ...	... Banbury Baptist Chapel
Curfew, John	... Christian Church, Flowery Field
Cuthbertson, Rev. William, B.A.	... Congregational Association, Herts.
Cullen, Rev. G. D. ...	...
Cullen, James	... Gt. George-st. Congregational Chapel, Liverpool
Curwen, John	... Nonconformist Meeting, Stretford
Currie, Rev. W. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Devonport
Curwen, Rev. John ...	...
Davis, Rev. William Steadman	... Union Chapel, Queen's Park, Manchester
Davenport, William ..	... Bethel Independent Church, Bury
Daniels, Edmund ...	... Congregational Church, Daubhill, Bolton
Darwent, Rev. William...	... Independent Church, Haverhill

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Dawson, John	... Bramley Reform Club
Darby, Charles... ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Wrexham
Darnton, Rev. P. W., M.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Chester
Davies, Richard ...	... Baptist Church, Grosvenor-street, Manchester
Davies, Rev. D., B.A. ...	... Congregational Union, Herts.
Davies, Rev. Theo. ...	...
Davies, John	... Congregational Church, Pendlebury
Davies, C.	... Baptist Ch., Frogmore-street Ch., Abergavenny
Dale, Rev. Bryan, M.A.	... Zion Congregational Church, Halifax
Davies, John	... Salford Welsh Calvinistic Methodists
Dawson, George, M.A.	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Dawson, Alfred ...	... George-street Baptist Chapel, Nottingham
Davis, B. B.	... Baptist Chapel, Bury Road, Haslingden
Davis, Rev. Charles A.	... Baptist Chapel, Chesterfield
Davies, Robert ...	... Tabernacle, Baptist Chapel, Cardiff
Davies, J.	... Methodist New Connexion, Stalybridge
Davies, David	... Gartside-street Welsh Chapel
Davies, Robert J., J.P.	... Calvinistic Methodists, Cardiganshire
Davies, Rev. J. Alden ...	... Congregational Church, Edge-hill, Liverpool
Darby, Rev. W. E. ...	... Nonconformists of Chippenham
Dale, R. W., M.A. ...	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Davies, Rev. D. ...	... Zion Baptist Chapel, Bacup
Davies, Rev. W. Owen	... Baptist Chapel, Cow Lane, Coventry
Davids, Rev. T. W. ...	... Congregational Union, Essex
Davies, Rev. Ellis Thomas	... Congregational Union of Denbigh and Flint
Daniel, W. L. ...	... Nonconformist Association, Merthyr
Davis, W. Foster ...	... Baptist Chapel, Myrtle-street, Liverpool
Davies, D.	... Nonconformist Meeting, Bromsgrove and Congregational Chapel, Bromsgrove
Davies, Charles ...	... Congregational Church, Minshull
Dangerfield, W. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Stroud
Davies, Ishmael ...	... Congregational Church, Booth-st. East, Manchester
Dawson, James ...	... Congregational Church, Tonneley-st., Macclesfield
Davies, Rev. Aaron ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Monmouthshire
Davis, John S. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Davies, William ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Flintshire
Davies, Rev. W. T. ...	... Baptist Church, Pandyr Chapel, Corwen
Davies, Rev. D. ...	... Meeting of Nonconformists of Lancaster
Derry, Rev. Thomas ...	... Nonconformist Committee, St. Helens
Dendy, John ...	... Monton Chapel, Eccles
Denovan, Rev. W. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Tintwistle
Dean, George	... Derby Branch Liberation Society
Dew, Samuel	... Calvinistic Methodists, Anglesey
Dent, Rev. Thomas ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Moldgreen
Dewstoe, Rev. William S.	... Nonconformist Committee, Dudley
Dearden, Richard ...	... Congregational Church, Chapel-street, Salford
Dickinson, J.	... Nonconformists of Wolverhampton
Dickinson, Rev. J. ...	... Congregational Church, Bridlington
Dickson, William ...	... Congregational Church, Lytham
Dickenson, Rev. W. H.	... Congregational Union, North Bucks
Donne, Rev. James ...	... Calvinistic Methodists Anglesey

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Dothie, Rev. Elvery, B.A.	... Dundas-st. Congregational Church, Sunderland, Independent Church, High-st., Lancaster, and Nonconformist Meeting, Lancaster
Dobson, Rev. Thomas R.	... North Midland Presbyterian and Unitarian Association, and Friargate Unitarian Chapel, Derby
Dobson, Mr.	... Oldham Road Independent Church, Manchester
Douglas, George ...	... Fawcett-street Congregational Church, Sunderland
Dowson, Rev. H. Enfield, B.A.	... The Monthly Conference
Dodgshun, James ...	... Congregational Church, Queen-street, Leeds
Dowty, Rev. John, M.A.	... Wesleyan
Downing, T. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Gallowgate, Leicester
Dowson, Rev. Henry ...	... Baptist College, Bury
Dobson, George Burton	... Congregational Union of North Riding
Drysdale, Rev. A. H. ...	... Trinity United Presbyterian Church, Rochdale
Drew, Rev. William ...	.. Nonconformist Committee, Wigan
Drewett, Rev. W. H. ...	... Stockport Road Congregational Ch., Manchester
Driver, Rev. S. B. ...	... Congregational Church, Hitchin
Driver, Rev. J. P. ...	... Shrewsbury Nonconformists
Drewry, Thomas ...	...
Dunckley, Rev. James	... Baptist Church, Upton-on-Severn
Dunkley, R. R. ...	... Leyton Congregational Church
Duthie, Rev. Wm. ...	... Werneth Congregational Church, Oldham
Duthie, Rev. James ...	... Congregational Church, Openshaw
Dunn, Rev. George ...	... Congregational Church, Edgeworth
Dutton, Richard, jun. ...	... Bowdon District Cheshire Congregational Union
Duckworth, James ...	... Castlemere Sunday School, Rochdale
Dunkerley, Wm. ...	... Congregational Ch., Chorlton Road, Manchester
Earp, H. W.	... Baptist Chapel, Melbourne, Derby
Eastmead, Rev. John S.	... Salem Chapel and Liberation Society, Wakefield
Eccles, Alexander, B.A.	... Congregational Chapel, Huyton
Eden, C. H.	... Methodist Free Church, St. Stephen-st., Salford
Eddison, Rev. William	... Congregational Chapel, Rushworth, Halifax
Edminson, L. T. ...	... Sale Independent Church
Edwards, John ...	... Calvinistic Methodist, Lleya and Erfionydd, Carnarvonshire
Edmonds, John Augustus	... Baptist Chapel, Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton
Edwards, Rev. Roger ...	... Calvinistic Methodist Association, North Wales
Edwards, John ...	... Baptist Chapel, Grosvenor-street, Manchester
Edwards, Rev. T. C. ...	... Ebor Vale Congregational Church
Edwards, Rev. Edwin ...	... Nonconformists of Calne
Edwards, W. T., M.D.	... Congregational Chapel, Charles-street, Cardiff
Edwards, Edward ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Denbighshire
Edwards, Rev. Charles	... The Wellington Circuit of United Methodist Free Churches
Edwards, John ...	... Baptist Chapel, Camden Road, London
Edwards, Rev. William	... E. District Glamorganshire Con. Association
Egg, Rev. Edward Thomas	... Congregational Union, England and Wales
Everett, Rev. E. K. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Stalybridge
Ellington, H. R. ...	... London Educational Committee
Ellis, William Charles ...	... Nonconformists of Great Chesterford
Elias, William Owen ..	... Welsh Presbyterian Ch., Netherfield Road L'pool.

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Ellis, Charles	... Nonconformists of Maidstone
Ellard —, ...	... Doddridge Chapel, Northampton
Embly, Henry ...	... Sub. and Delegate, Nonconformist Association, Manchester
Entwistle, Robert ...	... Bolton Nonconformists
Etches, John	... Baptist Church, St. Mary's-gate, Derby
Evans, J. H.	... Hannah-street Congregational Church, Cardiff
Evans, Rev. D. D. ...	... Salop Association of Independent Churches
Evans, Morgan ...	... Glamorganshire Congregational Association
Evans, Rev. William ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Pembrokeshire
Evans, Rev. Joseph ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Carmarthen
Evans, Rev. P. M. ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Flintshire
Evans, Richard ...	... East Lancashire Union of Baptist Churches
Evans, John S. H. ...	... Nonconformists of Rhyl
Evans, John	... Cong. Church, Crow Lane, Newton-le-Willows
Evans, Rev. Owen ...	.. Congregational Union, Montgomeryshire
Evans, Rev. E. H. ...	... Congregational Union of North Carnarvonshire
Ewen, F.	... Graham-street Chapel, Birmingham
Fagg, W.	... Nonconformists of Folkestone
Farrow, James ...	... Baptist Church, Glodwick
Farmer, James ...	... Congregational Union, Notts
Farn, J. C.	... Spain Lane Unitarian Church, Boston
Faull, Rev. J. N. G. ...	... Chapman-st. U. Meth. Free Church, Manchester
Faith, Rev. W. ...	... Congregational Church, Wheatley, Oxon
Fernie, Rev. John ...	... Queen-street Church, Burslem
Fenton, William ...	... Bamford Chapel, Rochdale
Ferguson, Mr. A. ...	... Christian Chapel, Grosvenor-st. C.-on-Medlock
Fildes, Henry ...	... Hanover Chapel, Stockport
Fielden, William ...	... Congregational Church, Bowdon
Firks, Rev. S. H. ...	... Great Whyte Ramsey Baptist Chapel
Fisher, G. F.	... Congregational Church, Cheadle
Fisher, Rev. John ...	... Howard-street Chapel, Sheffield
Fisk, Rev. Thomas ...	... Baptist Church, Kidderminster
Fitton, John	... Congregational Church, Pendlebury
Finlayson, Rev. T. C. ...	... Rusholme Congregational Church, Manchester
File, C. C.	... Bollington Liberal Association
Firth, Benjamin ...	... Independent Chapel, George-st., Heckmondwike
Firth, L. H.	...
Fletcher, Henry H. L.	... Congregational Church, Werneth
Fletcher, James ...	... Baptist Chapel, King-street, Oldham
Flack, Philip	... Ebenezer Baptist Church, Millgate, Rochdale
Fletcher, A. E., F.G.S. ...	... Congregational Church, Edgehill, Liverpool
Flinn, Edwin	... Nonconformist Committee, Coventry
Fletcher, James... ...	... Congregational Church, Werneth
Fletcher, Joseph ...	... Baptist Church, New Lenton, near Nottingham
Fletcher, Lavington E. ...	... Rusholme Road Chapel, Manchester
Fletcher, William ...	... United Methodist Free Ch., Manchester District
Flatman, Edward ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Frome
Fletcher, Johnson ...	... Northwich Congregational Church
Fletcher, Rev. Joseph ...	... Congregational Union
Fox, Rev. John ...	... Unitarian Congregation, Heywood

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Fowler, T. R.	... Chatham Place Congregational Chapel, Liverpool
Foster, Rev. Abraham ..	... Congregational Church, Park Road, Blackburn
Francis, John	... Upper Brook-street Free Church, Manchester
France, William S. ...	... Wigan Nonconformist Association
Franks, Rev. Enoch ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Bolton
Freeman, Rev. William...	... Nonconformists, East Dereham
Franklin, J. W. ...	... Baptist Congregational Church, Stourbridge
French, Rev. William Henry	... Congregational Union, North Bucks
France, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Loxley, Sheffield
Freeston, Rev. Jos, ...	... Missionary Conference, Manchester
Frimston, William R. ...	... Calvinistic Meth. Ch., Grosvenor Sq., Manchester
Frimston, John... ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Manchester
France, James	... Congregational Ch., Chorlton Road, Manchester
Francis, Rev. W. ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Heywood
Furness, John	... Baptist Church, Fishergate, Preston
Garside, Rev. Joseph ...	... Connexional Committee of United M. F. Church
Gasquoine, Rev. Thomas	... Old Chapel, Oswestry
Galbraith, Rev. Angus ...	... Nonconformists of Whitehaven
Gallsworthy, Richard ...	... Congregational Church, Headingley Hill
Gaskell, Rev. W., M.A...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Galloway, Rev. J. C., M.A.	... English Congregational Chapel Building Society
Gale, J. T.	... Baptist Chapel, South Parade, Leeds
Garland, Alfred P. ...	... Subs. and Delegate Manchester Noncon. Assocn.
Garnett, S..	... Free Gospel Church, Liverpool
Gee, Thomas	... Calvinistic Methodists, Denbighshire
George, Rev. D. ...	.. Baptist Chapel, Lumb
Gausby, John B. ...	... Wycliffe Baptist Chapel, Birmingham
Gibb, John	... Congregational Church, Eccles
Gibb, Walter	... Congregational Church, Eccles
Gibberd, John P. ...	... Congregational Church, Nuneaton
Gilbert, Rev. Anthony ...	... Lever-street Chapel, Manchester, and Manchester District of United Methodist Free Churches
Gibson, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Pendleton
Gill, Rev. Anthony C. ...	... Congregational Church, North Malvern
Gilchrist, Rev. J. W. ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Rochdale
Gibb, John Allen ...	... Worsley Road Congregational Church, Swinton
Gilchrist, ...	... Congregational Church, High-street, Lancaster, and Meeting of Nonconformists, Lancaster
Glossop, James... ...	... Platt Unitarian Chapel, Rusholme
Gledstone, Rev. J. P. ...	... Congregational Church, Queen-street, Sheffield
Goadby, Rev. W. F. ...	... Congregational Church, Bluntisham, Hunts
Goodman, Neville, M.A.	... Cambridge Religious Equality Association
Goldie, William ...	... Congregational Union, Notts.
Golding, George ...	... Baptist Chapel, Myrtle-street, Liverpool
Golding, H. H.... ...	... Baptist Chapel, Myrtle-street, Liverpool
Gordon, Rev. Alexander, M.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool
Godwin, William ...	... Congregational Church, Market Drayton
Goddard, Mr.	... Hallfield Baptist Chapel, Bradford
Goodman, Henry ...	... St. Ives Free Church
Gordon, Rev. John ...	... Warwickshire Ministers' Meeting
Goaling, Alfred... ...	... Congregational Church, Carr's Lane, Birmingham

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Gordon, A.	... Nonconformists of Walsall
Goodliffe, Arnold ...	... Baptist Church, Broad-street, Nottingham
Gould, Rev. George ...	... Nonconformists of Norwich
Grant, J. M.	... United Presbyterian Church, Pendleton
Graham, Rev. J. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Nottingham
Gray, William	... General Baptist New Connexion
Gray, Rev. A. B. ...	... Congregational Church, Settle
Green, Spencer	... Stoke Congregational Church
Green, Rev. Thomas, M.A.	... Ashton Auxiliary Liberation Society
Griffiths, Rev. William ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Derby
Griffiths, Rev. Edward ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Montgomeryshire
Grundy, Samuel ...	... Congregational Church, Bond-street, Leicester
Greenhough, Rev. J. G., M.A.	... Providence Chapel, Cosely, Halifax
Greening, Rev. F. J. ...	... Baptist Church, Victoria-street, Crewe
Greenwell, E.	... Congregational Church, Rossett
Grey, Rev. John Temperley	... Congregational Church, Ludlow, Salop
Gregory, Elisha... ...	... Congregational Church, Wigan
Griffiths, Rev. Cornelius	... Nonconformist Committee, Merthyr
Griffiths, Rev. T. ...	... Baptist Church, Millgate, Rochdale
Griffiths, Richard ...	.. Nonconformist Educational Board, Llangollen
Griffith, Edward ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Merionethshire
Gray, P.	... Baptist Church, College-street, Northampton
Green, Rev. J.	... Baptist Chapel, Hebden Bridge
Greenway, J.	... Baptist Chapel, George-street, and Nutty Chapel, Plymouth
Green, Geo.	... Nonconformists of Eccles
Grimwade, Edward ...	... County Union and Liberation Society, Ipswich
Green, Singleton ...	... Ebenezer Baptist Chapel, Haslingden
Green, Spencer ...	... Congregational Church, Stoke
Graham, Joseph ...	... Bury Circuit Primitive Methodists
Gregory, Henry George ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Salisbury
Griffith, John	... Nonconformists of Aberystwith
Griffith, John	... Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church, Seacombe, Liverpool
Griffiths, Rev. Rees ..	... Bethany Baptist Chapel, Cardiff
Graham, Rev. William ...	... United Presbyterian Ch., Mount Pleasant, L'pool
Green, Benjamin ...	... Congregational Church, Chapel-street, Southport
Greenwell, Geo. ...	... Congregational Church, Rossett
Griffiths, Pidduck ...	... Congregational Church, Chapel-street, Southport
Grosart, Rev. A. B. ...	... N. E. Lancashire Nonconformist Association
Guest, Rev. William, F.G.S.	... Kent Congregational Association
Guthrie, Rev. John, M.A.	... Glasgow Liberation Society
Gurteen, D., sen. ...	... Congregational Church, Haverhill
Gurteen, D., jun. ...	... Congregational Church, Haverhill
Griffith, Rev. W. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Gutteridge, Rev. J. ...	... ,, ,,
Haigh, Rev. W. ...	... Steep Lane Baptist Church, Sowerby
Haslam, Rev. John ...	... Leeds District Baptist Churches
Hadwen, Mr. William ...	... Fairfield Congregational Church, Manchester
Harley, Rev. Robert ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Hague, J. H.	... Independent Chapel, Knott Mill, Manchester

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Hamer, Rev. D. Jones ...	... Richmond Chapel, Salford
Hanson, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Bath-st., Huddersfield
Hargreaves, Richard ...	... New Road Chapel, Bury
Hart, Thomas E. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne
Hall, Rev. A.	... City Road Congregational Church, Manchester
Harrison, Thomas ...	.. The Christian Disciples, Stockport
Harker, John	... United Meth. Free Church, Russell-st., Liverpool
Harkeson, Henry ...	... Union-street Chapel, Hyde
Hargreaves, Rev. John R.	... Nonconformists of Ramsgate
Hall, J. W.	... Congregational Church, Wirksworth
Hall, Rev. John ...	... Presbytery of Antrim
Hayward, Henry ...	... Manchester District Meeting of U. M. F. Churches
Hall, Rev. J. G. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Bacup
Harvey, Rev. Joseph ...	... Baptist Chapel, Knowsley-street, Bury
Haworth, William ...	... Baptist Chapel, Barnes-street, Accrington
Haworth, Thomas ...	.. Congregational Church, Accrington
Harris, Benjamin ...	... Church of Saviour, Edward-st., Birmingham
Harris, Edmund ...	... Highbury Independent Chapel
Harrison, Rev. William...	... Swinton Unitarian Church
Hamer, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Cheetham Hill
Hardwick, Alfred ...	.. Myrtle-street Chapel, Liverpool
Hankinson, Rev. J. ...	... Independent Day School Committee, Leek
Hankinson, Richard ...	... Independent Day School Committee, Leek
Hayes, Thomas T., jun.	... Congregational Church, Leigh
Harwood, John, jun. ...	... Unitarian Chapel, Commission-street, Bolton
Hartley, Fountain J. ...	... Congregational Union, England and Wales
Handley, Rev. S. B. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Stafford
Hay, George	... Congregational Church, Lytham
Hazelwood, —	... Doddridge Chapel, Northampton
Hall, William	... St. Mary's Baptist Church, Derby
Halstead, H. R. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Bradford
Harley, John	... Bailie-street United Methodist Free Ch. Rochdale
Hallam, H.	... Steelhouse Lane Chapel, Birmingham
Hamilton, Robert ...	... Canterbury Electoral Union
Hansom, William ...	 Baptist Church, King-street, Oldham
Hastwick, Rev. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Market Drayton
Hawkins, Henry, J.P. ...	... Thames-street Chapel, Wallingford
Hanson, George ...	... Congregational Church, Union-street, Oldham
Halstead, William ...	... Bethel Chapel, Bury
Hardman, Thomas ...	... Nonconformists of Leigh
Hall, F.	... ,, of Bradford
Hall, Thomas	... United Presbyterian Church, Brunswick-street, Manchester
Hargreaves, Rev. J. ...	... Methodist Free Church, Harrogate
Hart, W. H.	... U. M. F. Church, Birmingham Circuit
Haworth, Thomas W. ...	... Independent Church, Droylsden
Hacking, John B. ...	... Farnworth Congregational Church
Harwood, John ...	... Bank-street Chapel, Bolton
Harvie, John	... Nonconformists of St. Helens
Hamilton, Rev. Robert ...	... Congl. Ch., Petworth, and Congl. Union of Sussex
Haughton, John ...	... Congregational Church, Stockport Road

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Hall, James	... Fourth District Derby Congregational Union
Harrison, Robert ...	... Zion Chapel, Stretford Road, Manchester
Hartley, Timothy ...	... Baptist Church, Hunslet, Leeds
Hartley, Rev. T. ...	... Congregational Church, Marple
Harding, E. C. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Hannay, Rev. Alexander	... Congregational Union of England and Wales
Harper, William ...	... Bolton Nonconformist Committee
Harper, Rev. F. ...	... First Baptist Church, Haworth
Harper, Rev. John ...	... Baptist Church, Horsforth
Harrison, James ...	... Congregational Church, Stubbins
Hall, Rev. J.	... Primitive Methodists, Woodley
Hainsworth, James ...	... Congregational Church, Greenmount, Tottington
Harry, Rev. Wm. Warlow	... Congregational Church, Knutsford
Hatton, William ..	.. Miles Platting Sunday School, Manchester
Harvey, James ...	... Congregational Church, Pendleton
Hartland, Rev. G. J. ...	... Congregational Union of Gloucester and Hereford
Heap, Edmund ...	... Enon Chapel, Burnley
Heap, John	... Green Mount Church, Tottington
Heywood, Daniel ...	... Congregational Sunday School, Royton
Herbert, Rev. T. M., M.A.	... Congregational Church, Cheadle
Heath, Henry M. ...	... Camb. Heath Congr. Church, Hackney, London
Heath, H. H.	... Upper Norwood Baptist Church, Surrey
Henry, George ...	... Congregational Church, Newton-le-Willows
Henson, Rev. H. E. ...	... Congregational Ch., Dogley Lane, Huddersfield
Heathcote, Henry John	... Congregational Church, Erdington and Warwickshire Congregational Union
Heath, David	... Methodist New Connexion, Elland
Heath, Edwin ...	... Congregational Church, Millhill, Blackburn
Hewgill, Rev. Wm., M.A.	... Congregational Church, Farnworth
Herford, Rev. W. H., B.A.	... Upper Brook-street Free Church, Manchester
Henzell, William ...	... Bath Lane Congregational Ch., Newcastle-on-Tyne
Helm, Elijah	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Herford, Rev. Brooke ...	... " " "
Heywood James, F.R.S...	... London Educational Committee
Hill, John	... Congregational Church, Cavendish-st., Manchester
Hibbert, James ...	... Congregational Church, New Mills
Higham, John ...	... Bowdon District Cheshire Union
Hinmers, William ...	... Congregational Church, West End, Southport
Higginbotham, John ...	... U. M. Free Church, Chesterfield
Hill, John	... Branch of Liberation Society, Heywood
Hill, Rowland	... Trustees of Bedford School
Hirst, John	... Congregational Church, Springhead, and Young Men's Branch of Liberation Society, Oldham
Hill, W. H.	...
Hirst, James H. ...	... Noncon. Association of Brighouse and District
Hill, William	... U. M. Free Church, Bury
Hirst, E.	... Congregational Church, Clayton
Hill, John	... Salem Independent Chapel, Bradford
Hindsley, Rev. Thomas...	... Congregational Church, Walsall
Hindshaw, J. W. ...	... United Presbyterian Church, Pendleton
Hindle, Robinson ...	... Pleasant-street Baptist Chapel, Haslingden

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Hillman, Rev. S. D. ...	... Congregational Church, Ilkley
Hindle, William ...	... Congregational Church, Blackburn
Hindley, Rev. F. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Hoyle, William... ...	... Young Men's Auxiliary Liberation Society, Castlemere
Horan, James	... Fawcett-st. Congregational Church, Sunderland
Hodgkinson, S.	... Congregational Church, Marple
Holliday, Rev. A. ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Darlington
Howard, Rev. Mark ...	... Congregational Church, Westgate, Heckmondwike
Horrocks, William ...	... Unitarian Church, Stand
Hodgkinson, John ...	... Congregational Church, Ashton-in-Mackerfield
Holborn, Rev. Alfred, M.A.	... Congregational Church, Huyton
Holden, Angus... ...	... Liberation Society, Bradford
Horne, James	... Nonconformists of Royton
Hobson, Matthew . .	... Nonconformists of Ilkestone
Hodgkinson, G. N. ...	... Congregational Church, Heywood
Holmes, Frank ...	... Miles Platting Unitarian Church, Manchester
Howe, Rev. John ...	... Baptist Church, Waterbarn
Holder, Thos., J.P. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool
Hollins, Samuel ...	... Bank-street Chapel, Bolton
Horne, Rev. D., M.A. ...	... Hope Congregational Church, Hanley
Horne, Rev. A. ...	... Atherton Nonconformists
Hodgkinson, James ...	... Congregational Church, Bolton
Homeyard, Samuel ...	... Highbury Chapel, Graham-street, Birmingham
Holden, E. T. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Walsall
Hodgson, Rev. Jas. M.	... Congregational Church, Uttoxeter
Holt, James	... Bethel Chapel, Bury
Houlgate, Rev. W. J. ...	... Congregational Church, Haslingden
Hopkinson, John ...	. . Rusholme Road Congregational Ch., Manchester
Horn, James	... Baptist Church, Idle, Leeds
Horton, Rev. T. G. ...	... Congregational Ch., Queen-st., Wolverhampton
Howarth, John ...	... Baptist Church, Waterbarn
Howell, P.	... Independent Church, Four Crosses
Hood, Jesse	... Congregational Church, Adlington
Hodgson, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Union-street, Oldham
Hodgkinson, Robert ...	... Congregational Church, Cheadle
Hughes, W. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Rusholme
Howell, H. J.	... Liberal Registration Society, Llanelly
Howat, George R. ...	...
Hodgkinson, Councillor	... Congregational Church, Rusholme
Hope, George	... Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, and St. Mark's Chapel, Edinburgh
Hughes, Charles ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Wrexham
Hudston, Rev. James ...	... Meth. New Con. Church, Breckfield Road, L'pool
Hudson, William ...	... Carr's Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham
Hubbard, Rev. W. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Hudson, William ...	... Hull and East Riding Congregational Union
Hudson, George ...	... Independent Church, Tottington
Hulston, Joseph ...	... Halesowen Nonconformists
Hughes, Samuel ...	... Congregational Church, Burlington-st., Liverpool
Hurtley, R. J.	... Zion Chapel, Burnley

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Hughes, George ...	... Baptist Church, Hyde
Hughes, John	... Calvinistic Methodist Association, North Wales
Hughes, William ...	... Crescent Congregational Church, Liverpool
Hughes, Rev. James ...	... Baptist Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne
Hudson, Matthew ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Wigan
Hutchison, Alexander ...	... Nonconformists, Ripley
Hughes, Rev. J. Gwynne	... Congregational Union, Essex
Hulme, John	... Baptist Church, King Street, Oldham
Hughes, Hugh	... Stanley Independent Church, near Liverpool
Hughes, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Hollingworth
Humphreys, Rev. G. W., B.A.	... Baptist Western Association
Hunt, T. W.	... Congregational Church, Wirksworth
Hunt, Rev. Mr. ...	... Primitive Methodist Second Circuit, Manchester
Hutchings, Rev. R. C. ...	... East Devon Congregational Union
Hubbard, Alexander ..	... Sherwell Congregational Church
Hurst, Samuel	... Pontefract Congregational Church
Hughes, Charles, J.P. ...	... Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire Welsh Calvinistic Methodists
Hutchison, John ...	... Baptist Church, Ramsbottom
Hunt, William	... Congregational Church, Oakengates
Higginbottom, John ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Hyde, Rev. J.	... ,, ,, ,,
Hughes, James	... ,, ,, ,,
Haworth, Abraham ...	... ,, ,, ,,
Hopkinson, Councillor ...	... ,, ,, ,,
Hutton, Mr.	... Methodist New Connexion, Miles Platting
Illingworth, Alfred, M.P.	... Nonconformists, Bradford
Ingall, George	... Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Irving J.	... Over Congregational Church, Cheshire
Isard, Joseph	.. Nonconformist Meeting, Tunbridge
Ingham, Richard ...	... Infirmary Street Baptist Church, Bradford
Ibbetson, D. A. ...	... Baptist Church, Ramsey
Inglish, William W. ...	... Every Street Baptist Church, Manchester
Isherwood, John ...	... West End Congregational Church, Southport
Jackson, Rev. E. S. ...	... Congregational Church, Uppingham, Rutland
Jackson, George ...	... Congregational Church, Whitehaven, and Congregational Union, Cumberland
Jackson, Stanway ...	... Congregational Church, Eccles
Jackson, Rev. George ...	... Congregational Church, Minshull
Jackson, William ...	... North Riding Congregational Union
Jackson, Rev. Robert ...	... Independent Church, Gainsborough
Jackson, Rev. W. E. ...	... New Lane Baptist Church, Oswaldtwistle
Jones, J. C.	... Cavendish-street Congregational Ch., Manchester
James, John	... Welsh Cal. Methodists, Carmarthenshire
James, Rev. William ...	... Calv. Methodists M. Meeting, Manchester
Jenkins, R.	... Llanelly Registration Society
Jameson, A. P. ...	... United Pres. Church, Coupland-st., Manchester
Jarrom, Joseph... ...	... Friar Lane Church, Leicester
Jarvis, Rev. G. Payne ...	... Congregational Union, Ireland
Jenkins, Rev. D. M. ...	... Northern Division Carnarvon Cong. Union
Jenkins, John J. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Swansea

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Jenkins, Rev. B. ...	... Welsh Baptist Chapel, U. Medlock-st., Manchester
Jeremy, Richard F. ...	... Merthyr Nonconformist Committee
Johnson, Richard, J.P. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Job, Thomas B.... ...	... Great George-street Congl. Chapel, Liverpool
Jones, Thomas	... Nonconformist Educational Board, Llangollen
John, Rev. David ...	... Congregational Church, Booth-st. East, Manchester
Johnson, David... ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Wrexham
Johnston, William A. P., M.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Darlington
Jones, S.	... Albert Road Presbyterian Cong., Oswestry
Johns, Rev. James, A. B.	... Congregational Church, Northwich
Jones, W. Highfield ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Wolverhampton
Johnson, George ...	... Primitive Methodists of Derby Circuit
Jones, Griffith	... Aberystwith Nonconformists
Johnson, Rev. G. B. ...	... Congregational Chapel, Edgbaston, Birmingham
Jones, Thomas Williamson	... Nonconformist Committee, Chester
Johnson, Richard, J.P. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Bootle, Liverpool
Jones, Rev. J.	... Carnarvonshire Baptist Association
Johnstone, Frank ...	... Independent Chapel, James-street, Blackburn
Johnson, J. G.	... Unitarian Chapel, Stockport
Johnstone, Rev. F. Sonley	... Nonconformists, Merthyr
Jones, Edward	... Baptist Congregation, Corwen
Johnstone, William ...	... St. James's Street Chapel, Nottingham
Jones, Richard	... Calvinistic Methodists, East Merionethshire
Jones, Rev. Evan ...	.. Baptist Association, Denbigh, Flint, & Merioneth.
Jones, Rev. W. Emlyn ...	... Western Division of Glamorganshire and Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Jones, John	... Montgomeryshire (Lower) Presbytery
Jones, John	... Congregational Church, Oxton Road, Birkenhead
Jones, John	... Welsh Independent Chapel, Manchester
Jones, Rev. Richard ..	... Congregational Church of Montgomeryshire
Jones, John	... Welsh Calvinistic Ch., Prince's Road, Liverpool
Jones, R. P.	... Newbro', Anglesea
Jones, Hugh	... Penryn Nonconformists
Jones, John	... Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, Montgomeryshire
Jones, Joseph	... Congregational Ch., Snow Hill, Wolverhampton
Jones, Griffiths... ...	... Calvinistic Methodists of East Merionethshire
Jones, Rev. N. Cynhafal	... Calvinistic Methodists of West Merionethshire
Jones, J.	.. Corwen Nonconformists
Jones, Rev. Nath. N. ...	... Nonconformists, Penryn
Jones, Rev. Owen ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, West Merionethshire
Jones, C. R.	... Congregational Church, Montgomeryshire
Jones, Rev. Owen ...	... North Carnarvonshire Ministers
Jones, Thomas	... Newport Nonconformists
Jones, John	... Unitarian Chapel, Birkenhead
Jones, Philip	... Baptist Ch., Wellington-st., Gorton, Mancheste
Jones, Rev. Isaac ...	... Reform Association, Rhyl
Jones, N. R.	... Nonconformists, Merthyr
Jones, Captain	... Llanelly Liberal Registration Society
Judson, Rev. Josephus ...	... Baptist Chapel, Wellington, Salop
Jones, Daniel	... Nonconformist Committee, Cardiff
Jordan, Rev. D. N. ...	... Charlestown Congregational Church, Pendleton

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Kingsley, John... ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Kaye, John Barcroft ...	... Nonconformists of Keyworth
Kaye, Alderman Jno. ...	... Salem Congregational Church, Bromley
Kell, Robert	... Liberation Society, Bradford Branch
Kelsall, Isaac	... Stamford-st. Methodist New Connexion, Ashton
Kemp, G. T.	... Lancashire and Cheshire Free Baptist Churches
Kempson, William ..	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Kearley, George ...	... Bowdon Congregational Church
Kelly, Rev. John ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool
Kench, Rev. Thomas ...	... United Methodists Free Church, and North-east Lancashire Nonconformist Association
King, Rev. James ...	... Methodist Free Church, Hyde Road, Manchester
Kenrick, Timothy, J.P.	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Kenrick, J. Arthur, J.P.	... Church of the Messiah, Birmingham
Kenyon, William ...	.. Congregational Church, Farnworth
Kenworthy, Samuel ...	... Congregational Church, Bowdon
Keyworth, Dr. J. W. ...	... Steelhouse Lane Chapel, Birmingham
Kilshaw, John	... Arnon Chapel, Burnley
Kidd, Rev. George ..	... Primitive Methodists, Third Circuit, Liverpool
King, Rev. William H. ...	... Grange Lane Chapel, Birkenhead
Kiddle, Rev. John William	... Congregational Chapel, Well-street, Coventry
Kirk, James	... Addison-street Congregational Ch., Nottingham
Kitching, Albert George, F.G.S.	... Chase Side Congregational Church, Enfield
King, David	... Church of Christ, Geach-street, Birmingham
Knapp, James B. ...	.. Primitive Methodist Chapel, Stafford
Kitchin, William ...	... Congregational Church, Whitehaven
Knapton, W. J. ...	... Church of the Saviour, Birmingham
Knaggs, Rev. James ...	... Nonconformist Meeting and Stratford District Essex Union
Knight, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Heywood
Knott, George	... Association of Congregationalists, Sussex
Knott, John F.... ...	... Congregational Church, Melbourne-st., Stalybridge
Knowles, Rev. F. ...	... Congregational Church, Belper
Knowles, Samuel ...	... Ministers' and Deacons' Association, Bury Distr.
Lacey, Henry Ratcliffe ...	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
Lacey, J. S.	... Baptist Church, Mansfield
Lamport, W. J., J.P. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool
Lacon, Joseph	... Zion Congregational Church, Attercliffe
Lance, Rev. J. W. ...	... Nonconformists, Newport
Landels, Rev. William, D.D.	... London Baptist Association
Landsdale, Robert ..	... Tyldesley Congregational Church
Langley, Batty... ...	... Queen-street Church and Congregation, Sheffield
Latham, Charles ...	... Congregational Church, Ashton-in-Makerfield
Law, Henry	... Bethesda Chapel, Burnley
Lawson, Thomas ...	... Tower-street Congregational Ch., W. Hartlepool
Lawton, J. N.	... Mossley Unitarian Church
Leach, Joseph B. ...	... Nonconformist Association, St. Helens
Leather, Robert ...	.. Leigh Nonconformists
Lee, Rev. James, M.A.	... Wycliffe Chapel, Stockport
Lee, John	... Richmond Congregational Chapel, Salford
Lee, William Hartley, J.P	... Liberation Society and Zion Chapel, Wakefield

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Lee, Thomas	... Baptist Chapel, Bootle
Lee, Rev. Thomas G. ...	... New Windsor Chapel, Salford
Lees, Thomas	... Cavendish-street Congregational Ch., Manchester
Lees, William	... Tabernacle Congregational Church, Hanley
Lees, Rev. William ...	... Baptist Church, Walsall
Leonard, Rev. H. C., M.A.	... Baptist Association of Herts. and Bedfordshire
Leigh, William	... Hanover Church, Stockport
Levi, Rev. Thomas ...	... Cal. Meth., Glamorgan., and Non. Com. Swansea
Lewis, T. H.	... Baptist Church, Pole-street, Preston
Lewis Charles	... English Independent Churches, Monmouthshire
Lewis, Thomas	... Arvon Calvinistic Methodists
Lewis, Daniel	... Congregational Church, Charles-street, Cardiff
Lee, Henry	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Lewis, Edward	... Grosvenor-street Independent Church, Manchester
Leese, Joseph	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Lewis, Rev. Philip ...	... Brearley Baptist Church
Lowes, Ralph	... Congregationalists of Barrow-in-Furness
Lister, Rev. J. B. ...	.. Independent Church, Brighouse
Lightbown, Henry ...	... Congregational Church, Pendleton
Lloyd, Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, St. Ives
Lightbown, James ...	... Congregational Chapel, Pendleton
Lloyd, Rev. Morgan ...	... Leyton Congregational Church
Lings, Rev. Henry ...	... Congregational Church, Fleetwood
Linton, Thomas ...	... Hamilton Road United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Littlehales, R. ...	... Baptist Church, Briercliffe
Lloyd, Thomas ...	... Ebw Vale Congregational Church
Livingston, James ...	... Wesleyan and Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Longfield, Jos. ...	...
Lloyd, Edward ...	... Welsh Independent Church, Liverpool
Lloyd, John	... United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Lloyd, Richard ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Longbottom, William ...	... Batley Nonconformists
Lowe, William ...	... Free Methodists, Burton Circuit
Luckley, George ...	... Newcastle-on-Tyne Circuit, United Methodist Free Churches
Lusar, Rev. William ...	.. Methodist Free Church, Henry Square, Ashton
Lund, Rev. William ...	... Meeting of Nonconformists, Lancaster
Luckett, Rev. Henry ...	... Nonconformist Committee, West Bromwich
Lyon, John	... Congregational Church, Ashton-in-Makerfield
Luckett, Rev. G. ...	... Congregational Church, Tamworth
Lumsden, R. C., F.R.A.S.	... Park Congregational Church, Ramsbottom
Lunn, Rev. J. C. ...	... Presbyterian Congregation, Lancaster
MacClure, John ...	... Wigan Nonconformist Association
Macfayden, Rev. J. A., M.A.	... Congregational Church, Chorlton Road, M'chester
Maginnis, Rev. David ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Stourbridge
Macfarlane, Rev. Samuel	... United Methodist Free Churches, Liverpool
Macmaster, Rev. R. P. ...	... Baptist Church, Bristol
Macgregor, Duncan ...	... Round Chapel Baptist Church, Every-street, Manchester
Mackechnie, Alex. ...	... Primitive Methodists, Barnsley

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Mackennal, Rev. Alex., B.A.	... Congregational Ch., Gallowtree Gate, Leicester
MacKee, Rev. J. R. ...	... Shrewsbury Nonconformist Association
Mackibbin, George ...	... St. Helens Congregational Church
Maddrell, James ...	... Primitive Methodists, Liverpool, Second Circuit
Marshall, H.	... Doddridge Chapel, Northampton
Maden, Henry	... Baptist Church, Lumb, Rossendale
Maden, James	... Baptist Church ,, ,,
Maden, Rev. Robert ...	... Baptist Church, Ramsbottom
Marychurch, William ...	... Congregational Church, Hannah-street, Cardiff
Maden, Wentworth ...	... Baptist Church, Millgate, Rochdale
Macdougall, James ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Stratford
Magson, John	... Sale Congregational Church
M'Dougall, John ...	... Nonconformist Meeting, Stratford
Mander, George ...	... Zion Chapel, Wakefield
Manning, John... ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Nottingham
Mann, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Union of Wilts and East Somerset
Mann, Robert	... Church of the Saviour, Birmingham
Manton, John S. ...	... Church of the Saviour, Birmingham
Manton, Alderman Henry, J.P.	... Steel House Lane Chapel, Birmingham
Marriott, Charles H. ...	... Independent Chapel, Dewsbury
Mackie, Ivie	... Scottish Unitarian Christian Association
Marsden, James ...	... Christian Church, Wigan
Macleod, Rev. Alexander, D.D.	... Trinity United Presbyterian Church, Birkenhead
Marshall, David	... Carr's Lane Chapel, Birmingham
Marshall, Rev. Henry Thomas	... Stamford-st. Chapel, Meth. New Connx., Ashton
Marshall, Gervas ...	... Baptist Church, Accrington
Marshall, Thomas ...	... Stafford-street Baptist Church, Walsall
Martin, Mark	... Princes-street Chapel, Gravesend
March, Rev. D. ...	... Baptist Church, Stoke-upon-Trent
Mason, Hugh	... Liberation Society, Ashton
Mason, Adam	... New Chapel, Horwich
Mason, Thomas ...	... New Chapel, Horwich
Massey, Stephen ...	... Lee-street Chapel, Openshaw
Massey, Benjamin ...	... Congregational Church, Droylsden
Massey, William ...	... Heaton Mersey Congregational Church
Massie, John, M.A. ...	... Spring Hill College
Mather, John	... Congregational Church, Broughton
M'Cappin, Rev. J. C. ...	... Congregational Church, Radcliffe
M'Gowan, John S. ...	... Congregational Church, Whitehaven
Mather, John	... United Methodist Free Churches, Newcastle and Carlisle District
March, James ...	... Congregational Church, Cowley Hill
Matheson, Rev. James, B.A.	... Congregational Church, Friar Lane, Nottingham
Macwilliam, Rev. W. B.	... Ancoats Congregational Church, Manchester
Matkin, Lewis ...	... Christian Church, Tutbury, Staffordshire
Mackenzie, J. M. ...	... Ancoats Congregational Church, Manchester
Matthews, Amos B. ...	... United Meth. Free Churches, Cromford Circuit
May, Rev. Benjamin ...	... Baptist Church, Padiham
Mays, Rev. T. W., M.A.	... Congregational Church, Smethwick
Maxwell James ...	... Bethel Church, Henry-street, Bury
Meade-King, H. W. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
M'Callum, Rev. D. ...	.. Baptist Church, Melbourne, Derbyshire
Mawson, H. T. ...	... Methodist Free Church, Harrowgate
M'Cutcheon, John ..	... Liberation Society, Heywood
M'Curdy, Rev. Alexander	... United Methodist Free Church, Parliament-street, Nottingham
M'Dougall, Rev. James	... Independent Church, Darwen
M'Dougall, William ...	... Rodney-street Chapel, Wigan
M'Intyre, William ..	... Liberation Society, Derby
M'Coll, D.	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
M'Kean, James ...	... Downs Chapel, Bowdon
M'Dougall, Alexander, Esq.	... Independent Church, Penrith
M'Kerrow. John Begg ...	... United Presbyterian Church, Pendleton
Meek, John	... City Road Congregational Church, Manchester
M'Kerrow, Rev. J. M., B.A.	... United Presbyterian Church, Birmingham
Medwin, M.	... York Road Chapel, Lambeth, London
Mc.Master, James S. ...	... Bury Baptist College
Medicraft, Rev. John ...	... Nonconconformist Committee, Stockport
Miall, Rev. J. G. ...	... Salem Congregational Church, Bradford
Mellor, Rev. Dr. Enoch	... Congregational Church, Halifax
Mellor, Wright, J.P. ...	... Highfield Congregational Church, Huddersfield
Middlemore, J. T. ...	... Wycliffe Chapel, Birmingham
Middlemore, S. G. T. ...	... Bond-street Chapel, Birmingham
Middlemore, William, J.P.	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Miller, Rev. Marmaduke	... Leeds & Bradford United Methodist Free Churches
Miller, Isaac	... Baptist Chapel, Myrtle-street, Liverpool
Miller, John, J.P., ...	... Non-Subscribing Association, Ireland
Millar, R. J.	.. Nonconformists of Wakefield
Melland, W. E.... ...	... Congregational Church, Bowdon
Melland, C. J.	... Rusholme Road Congregational Ch., Manchester
Mills, John	... Cheshire County Union, Bowdon District
Midwood, Frederick ...	... Dobcross Congregational Church
Mills, Rev. Thomas ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leigh
Mills, Samuel	.. Meth. New Connexion Ch., Stamford-st., Ashton
Milne, David	... St. George's Presbyterian Church, Liverpool
Miller, John	... Nonconformist Association, Nottingham
Milne, Francis	.. Cheshire Congregational Union, Bowdon District
Milne, William... ..	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Milne, John	... Congregational Church, London Road, Leicester
Milne, Samuel	... Congregational Church, Burton Joyce
Milner, Edward ...	... Warrington Branch of Education League
Mines, Rev. Allan, B.A.	... Ministers' Fraternal Society, Huddersfield
Minton, Rev. Edward ...	... Abney Congregational Church, Mossley
Mitchell, Matthew ...	... Mount Pleasant Baptist Chapel, Burnley
Mitchell, Rev. Robert ...	... E. U. Church, Queen's Park, Manchester
Mitchell, William ...	... Unitarian Church, Accrington
Mitton, Edward Moss ...	.. Midland Baptist Union
Moodie, James	... Congregational Ch., Stockport Road, Manchester
Moon, Francis	... Independent Church, Wellington
Moore, Rev. W. K., M.A.	... St. George's Presbyterian Church, Liverpool
Moore, John	... U. M. Free Church, Northwich
Moore, W. F.	... Congregational Ch. Avenham Institution, Preston

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Morgan, W.	... Graham-street Chapel, Birmingham
Morgan, Alfred F. ...	... Grange Lane Baptist Chapel, Birkenhead
Morgan, W. Frank ...	... Common Close Congregational Ch., Warminster
Morgan, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Montague-st., Blackburn
Morgan, J. E.	... Baptist Church, Market Drayton
Morgan, G.	... Earby Congregational Church
Morgan, Professor William	... Congregational Monthly Meeting, Carmarthen
Morris, F. Sidney ...	... Congregational Church, Bowdon
Morison, Rev. William ...	... United Presbyterian Church, Pendleton
Morris, Claude J. ...	... Congregational Church, Bowdon
Morrall, M. T.	... Friends' Meeting, Matlock
Morrell, John S. ...	... Congregational Church, Darlington
Morrell, Mr. John ...	...
Morris, Rev. Edw. ...	... Sale Congregational Church
Moss, Mr. William ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Bolton
Mott, Isaac Robert ...	... Church of the Messiah, Birmingham
Mounsey, Edward ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool and Baptist Chapel, Myrtle-street
Muncaster, Rev. Joseph	... Congregational Church, Broughton
Murphy, Rev. John M. ...	... Swindon Nonconformists
Murray, Robert W. ...	... Wycliffe Chapel, Warrington
Muff, T. P.	... Congregational Church, Ilkley
Mycock, Joseph ...	... Independent Chapel, Hyde
Myers, Rev. John ...	... U. Methodist Free Churches, Bradford
Myers, Rev. J. B., B.A.	... Baptist Church, Kettering
Myers, Edward, F.G.S.	... Nonconformist Committee and Free Christian Church, Wolverhampton
Myers, T.	... U. Methodist Free Churches, Manchester
Myers, Thomas F. ...	... Bradford Nonconformists
Milling, Thomas ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Mc.Kerrow, Rev. W., D.D.	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Maclaren, Rev. Alexander	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Naylor, Joseph	... Nonconformist Committee, Kidderminster, and Old Meeting House Congregational Church
Needham, Rev. George ...	... Baptist Church, Burnley Lane
Nesbet, Rev. J. C. ...	... Bolton
Newth, Rev. Alfred ...	... Lancashire Independent College
Newton, James... ...	... Greenacres Chapel, Oldham
Neave, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Union, Dorchester
Newbery, W.	... Methodist New Connexion Ch., Newton Heath
Nixon, Charles	... Baptist Church, Grosvenor-street, Manchester
Nicholson, Joshua O. ...	... Congregational Ch., Townley Street, Macclesfield
Nicholls, Rev. Richard ...	... Nonconformists of Bacup and Neighbourhood
Nicholls, Rev. William ...	... Independent Ch., Ravenstonedale, Westmoreland
Nicholson, Joshua ...	... Congregational School, Leek
Nicholson, Thomas ...	... Nonconformists of Plymouth
Nicholson, J. H. ...	... Unitarian Church, Platt, Rusholme
Nightingale, John ...	... Congregational Church, Lymm
Nieson, Joseph... ...	... Hope Chapel, Wigan
Nicholson, Rev. T. ...	... Congregational Church, Cleckheaton
Noble, Douglas... ...	... Unitarian Church, Cross Street, Sale

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Norris, John	... Congregational Church, Lymm
Noble, Rev. R. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Widnes
Noton, Thomas... ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Oldham Circuit
Northrop, William ..	... Baptist Church, Bramley
Northrop, Jonathan ...	... Kipping Congregationalist Chapel
Nuttall, Rev. L. ...	.. Baptist Church, Ogden
Nuttall, Robert... ...	... Congregational Church, Castlecroft, Bury
Nuttall John	... ,, ,, ,, ,,
Nuttall, Rev. H. K. ...	... Bowling Congregational Church, Bradford
Oakden, Thomas ...	...
Ogle, Joseph	... Fourth District of Congl. Union of Derbyshire
Ogden, Rev. James ...	... Halifax North Circuit Methodist New Connexion
Oldring, Rev. G. W. ...	... Baptist Church, Mount Pleasant, Burnley
Oliver, Rev. David ...	... Congregational Ministers' Meeting, Bangor
Oldrid, John	... Nonconformists of Boston
Ordish, Rev. G. S. ...	... Congregational Church, Little Lever, Bolton
Orme, Rev. Edwin ...	... U. M. F. Church, St. Helens
Ormerod, Oliver ...	... U. M. F. Church, Rochdale
Orr, Professor	... Non-Subscribing Association, Ireland
Omerod, Thomas ...	... Noncon. Assoc. Brighouse, Rastrick and District
Osler, A. Follett, F.R.S.	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Osborn, George... ...	... Fuller Chapel, Kettering
Osborn, George... ...	... Congregational Church, Hallfield, Bradford
Overbury, Rev. H. L. ...	... Baptist Church, West Gorton
Owen, Joseph	... Rhyl Reform Association.
Pankhurst, F. H. ...	...
Parry, John	... Congregational Ch., Rusholme-road, Manchester
Payton, Mr. Councillor ...	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Parker, Rev. Ed. ..	... Baptist Church, Farsley, Leeds
Patterson, Rev. William	... United Methodist Free Church, Todmorden Circt.
Parry, A. J.	...
Parry, Griffith	... Welsh Presbyterians, Manchester and Salford
Pass, Thomas	... Cavendish-st. Congregational Church, Manchester
Parry, Rev. Ed. ...	... Welsh Presbyterian Ch., Heywood-st., Cheetham
Parkinson, Rev. H. W.	... Congregational Church, Rochdale
Parker, Rev. Thomas ...	... Mount Zion Congregational Church, Lye
Parker, Rev. James ...	... Trinity-road Baptist Chapel, Halifax
Partington, William ...	... Unitarian School, Dob-lane, Failsworth
Partington, John ...	... Unitarian School, Dob-lane, Failsworth
Parkyn, John	... Methodist New Connexion, Leeds
Paton, John Brown, M.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Nottingham
Paton, Rev. W.... ...	... Coleshill-street Congregational Church
Pattison, Rev. T. H. ...	... West-street Baptist Chapel, Rochdale
Paul, Thomas D. ...	... Baptist Association, Leicestershire
Park, Rev. William ...	... Congregational Church, Chapel-street, Southport
Pearce, James S. ..	.. Branch Liberation Society, Southampton
Perkins, John	... Baptist Church, Cloughfold, Newchurch
Petrie, John, jun. ...	... U. M. F. Church, Lowerplace, Rochdale
Peach, George	... Congregational Church, Stone
Pearson. Rev. Samuel, M.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool, and Great George-street Congregational Chapel

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Pearson, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Burton-on-Trent
Pearson, Theophilus ...	... Chesterfield Unitarian Church
Peel, Rev. W. E. ...	... Independent Church, Accrington
Peel, Thomas	... United Presbyterian Ch., Brunswick-st., Manchr.
Pennington, James ..	... Union-street Chapel, Hyde
Peters, Rev. Thomas ...	... Nonconformist Association, Chester
Petrie, John	... United Methodist Free Church, Rochdale
Petrie, James	... United Methodist Free Ch., Baillie-st. Rochdale
Perry, P. P., J.P. ...	... Doddridge Chapel, Northampton
Pendlebury, James Smith	... Meth. New Connexion Ch., Stamford-st., Ashton
Pedley, Richard ...	... Baptist Congregation, Wheelock Heath
Philpin, Moses	... Baptist Association, Warwickshire
Philpin, Mr. B. ...	... Worcester Baptist Church
Phillips, Alderman Thomas	... Glamorganshire Calvinistic Meeting, Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Phillips, John	... Great George-st. Congregational Chapel, Liverpool
Phillips, Rev. David ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Phillips, Rev. Alfred ...	... Congregational Church, Springhead
Phythian, Joseph ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Picton, Councillor J. A., J.P., F.S.A.	... Cong. Church, Great George-street, Liverpool
Piele, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Kendal
Pidduck, James ...	... Congregational Church, Wilmslow
Pillans, Rev. John ...	... London Congregational Board
Pickering, Councillor John	... Old Meeting Congregation, Birmingham
Pidduck, Thomas ...	... Nonconformists of Hanley
Pidduck, H. D. ...	... Tabernacle Congregational Church, Hanley
Pilkington, Richard ...	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
Pilkington, W. W. ...	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
Pickersgill, Rev. Hanley	... Congregational Church, Tunstall
Pink, William	... Nonconformist Committee, Leigh
Pike, Rev. Ed. Carey, B.A.	... Nonconformist Committee, Coventry
Pickford, Joshua H. ...	... Union-street Chapel, Hyde
Piggin, Rev. Henry ...	... Salem Methodist New Connexion, Manchester
Pike, Rev. J. C. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Piper, William	... Branch Liberation Society, Ipswich
Platt, William	... Hanbury Hill Congregational Church, Stourbridge
Place, Rev. William ...	... Independent Church, Patricroft
Player, Jno.	... Graham-street Chapel, Birmingham
Pollitt, Luke	... Unitarian Chapel, Failsworth
Pollit, J.	... Cavendish-street Congregational Ch., Manchester
Poynting, Rev. Charles T.	... Platt Unitarian Chapel, Rusholme
Potter, Rev. T. G. ...	... Congregational Church, Buxton
Potter, R. H.	... ,, ,, ,,
Porritt, Samuel... ...	... Bamford Chapel, Rochdale
Porritt, James	... Congregational Church, Stubbins
Porritt, R. M.	... ,, ,, ,,
Porritt, John A. ...	... ,, ,, ,,
Pownall, George ...	.. Shaftesbury Hall Congregation, Craven-st, Salford
Poynting, Rev T. E. ...	.. Unitarian Church, Monton, Eccles
Pottenger, Thomas ...	... Baptist Church, Warwick-street, Leamington

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Poole, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Lymington
Powell, Isaac	... Welsh Presbyterian Ch., Heywood-st., Cheetham
Priestley, John... ...	... Baptist Church, Lockwood
Pressland, T., jun. ...	... Baptist College, Northampton
Price, Edward	... Nonconformists of Worcester
Pryce, Rev. R. Vaughan, LL.B	... Congregational Union, Worcester
Prosser, Rev. James ...	... Primitive Methodists, West Bromwich
Prout, Rev. E. S., M.A.	... Branch Liberation Society, Bridgewater
Prout, Rev. Peter ...	... Pleasant-street Baptist Church, Haslingden
Pratt, Daniel	... Congregational Church, Cuckfield
Price, Rev. William T. ...	... Nonconformists of Stroud
Pugh, John	... Calvinistic Methodists, Flintshire
Priestman, John ...	... Branch Liberation Society, Bradford
Pressland, T., jun. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Northampton
Pywell, Rev. Joseph ...	... Baptist Church, Stockport
Rae, Rev. James, B.A. ...	... Nonconformists of Batley
Ravenscroft, Thomas ...	... Independent Church, Pendleton
Rain, Rev. Thomas ..	... Congregational Church, Cottingham
Ranicar, Elias	... Church of Christ, Rodney-street, Wigan
Rayner, John	... Cong. Church, Wellington Road, South Stockport
Rain, Robert	... Congregational Church, Droylsden
Rawson, Edwin ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Bradford
Rawlinson, Rev. J. ...	... Knot Mill Congregational Church, Manchester
Raleigh, Rev. Alexander, D.D.	... Congregational Union of England and Wales
Rawson, Henry... ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association.
Reed, Rev. Andrew ..	... C. Ch., St. Leonard's and British School Comm.
Reaney, Rev. G. S. ...	... Congregational Church, Warrington
Reid, Rev. John ...	... Salem Congregational Church, Burnley
Reid, Rev. William ...	... Nelson Congregational Church
Reyner, A. E.	... Ashton-under-Lyne Branch Liberation Society
Renton, Rev. Henry ...	... Session of United Presbyterian Church, Kelso
Rees, Rev. Thomas ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Breconshire
Rees, Rev. Dr. Thomas ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Reynolds, John... ..	... Flowery Field Christian Church, Hyde
Reynolds, Thomas ...	... Ancoats Congregational Church, Manchester
Rees, Rev. David ...	... Meeting of Independent Ministers of Anglesea
Reynolds, John... ...	.. Flowery Field Christian Church, Hyde
Renshaw, Rev. Joseph ...	... Birmingham District of U. Meth. Free Churches
Reed, Rev. Charles E. B., M.A.	... Nonconformists of Warminster, and Congregational Church, Common Close, Warminster
Redgate, Thomas ...	... Rusholme Road Congregational Ch., Manchester
Rees, Rev. William, D.D.	... Welsh Congregational Ch., Grove-st., Liverpool
Renals, Jno.	... Public Unsectarian Schools, Nottingham
Rees, B. R.	... Liberal Registration Society, Llanelly
Rhodes, Jno.	... Union Chapel, Harpurhey, Manchester
Richmond, Robert ...	... Baptist Church, Sheffield
Rigby, Thomas... ...	... Congregational Church, Over, Cheshire
Richards, R. C., J.P. ...	... Zion Chapel, Kirkham
Riddick, Adam... ...	... Congregational Church, Bolton
Rigby, Joseph	... Baptist Church, Stanningley
Rigby, Jno.	... Congregational Church, Bowdon

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Ride, Rev. George ...	... Unitarian Free Church, Chorley
Risque, Jno.	... Congregational Ch., Wellington Road, Stockport
Ridley, Rev. T. W. ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Rochdale
Richards, David ...	... Bethany Baptist Church, Cardiff
Richards, E. M., M.P. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Roberts, J. F	... Cavendish-st. Congregational Church, Manchester
Roberts, Samuel ...	... Baptist Church, Glodwick
Roberts, Griffith J. ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Carnarvonshire
Robertshaw, Calvin ...	... Allerton Congregational Church
Robertson, James B. ...	... Congl. Sabbath School, Great Horton, Bradford
Roscow, Fred C. ...	... Unitarian Congregation, Stand
Rogers, Rev. J. G., B.A.	... Clapham Congl. Church and Surrey Congl. Union, and London Nonconformist Committee
Rooke, Rev. T. G. ...	... Wilts and East Somerset Association of Baptist Churches, and Noncon. Committee, Frome
Robb, James	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Robjohns, Rev. Henry T., B.A. ...	Nonconformists, Newcastle-on-Tyne
Robinson, Rev. Thomas, B.A.	... Union-street Chapel, Hyde
Robinson, J.	... Zion Congregational Church, Wakefield
Roseman, Rev. William...	... Congregational Chapel, Castlecroft, Bury
Robinson, Rev. F. ...	... Cong. Church, Burton Joyce, Nottingham
Rodhouse, Charles ...	.. Congregational Church, Daventry
Roberts, Robert ...	... Salford Welsh Calvinists
Roberts, David ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Chester
Robson, John	... Congregational Church, Sale
Roberts, John	... Calvinistic Methodists of Arfon
Rowland, Robert ...	... Calvinistic Methodists of Lleyn and Eifionydd
Robinson, W. Wynn ...	... Midland Christian Union
Rogers, J. B.	... Nonconformist Congregation, Carmarthen
Roberts, Rev. Lewis ...	... Southern District of Glamorganshire
Roberts, R.	... Congregational Union, Garside-st. Cong. Church
Roberts, Owen ...	... Welsh Pres. Chapel, Netherfield-road, Everton
Robertson, Rev. J. B. ...	... Horton Branch Liberation Society
Rothwell, Joseph ...	... Congregational Church, Stubbins
Rogers, W.	... Graham-street Chapel, Birmingham
Roberts, John, M.D. ...	... Calvinistic Meth., Grosvenor Square, Manchester
Roberts, Jesse	... Subscriber and Delegate from Manchester Com.
Robinson, James ...	... Congregational Church, Droylsden
Robinson, Rev. John ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Haslingden Road, Rawtenstall
Robinson, J.	.. Doddridge Chapel, Northampton
Robinson, Cornelius ...	... Congregational Church, St. Ives, Hunts
Robinson, Stephen ...	... Unitarian Congregation, Stockport
Rowland, Rev. Alfred, LL.B.	... Wilts and East Somerset Congregational Union
Roberts, John	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool, and Welsh Calvinistic Meth., Prince's Road, Liverpool
Roberts, R. R.	... United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Robertshaw, Rev. — ...	... Independent Church, Stocksbridge
Roberts, Rev. J. G. ...	... Congregational Church, Howden
Rothwell, William ...	... Pleasant-street Baptist Chapel, Haslingden
Rowland, W.	... Welsh Calvinistic Church, Every-st., Manchester

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Royce, William ...	... Congregational Union, Notts.
Rutherford, Rev. John Hunter, M.D.	Nonconformist Association, and Bath Lane Church. Newcastle-on-Tyne
Rushworth, Rev. T. T. ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Brighouse
Russell, Rev. John ...	... Trinity Chapel, Bradford
Ruston, Joseph ...	... Congregational Union, Lincolnshire
Rudduck, Joseph B. ...	... Old Meeting and Liberals of the Borough of Westbury
Russell, Rev. David ...	... Glasgow Liberation Society
Russell, Dr.	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Ryder, Rev. Thomas ...	... Storey-street Chapel, Nottingham
Rymer, Thomas ...	... Congl. Ch., Grosvenor-st., Piccadilly, Manchester
Ryley, Thomas C. ..	... Nonconformist Committee, Wigan
Rumney, Alderman ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Salt, Titus	.. Saltaire Congregational Church
Salt, Mrs.	... Saltaire Congregational Church
Sanderson, Dearden ...	... Millgate Baptist Chapel, Rochdale
Sanderson, Edward ...	... Stockport Association of Nonconformists
Sanderson, Rev. William	... Free Gospel Churches, Liverpool
Sanders, Rev. Henry ...	... West Riding Congregational Association
Saunders, Arthur ...	... Great Whyte Ramsey Baptist Church, Hants
Sanders, William ...	... Cardiff Liberal Association and Wesleyan Church
Saxton, L.	... Methodist New Connexion, Stalybridge
Schofield, Thomas ..	... United Methodist Free Church, Castlemere
Scott, Rev. Caleb ...	... Newland Congregational Church, Leicester
Scott, Councillor W. A. ...	... Nonconformists of Rochdale
Scott, Rev. Jonathan ...	... Norwich Nonconformists
Schofield, J.	... Congregational Church, Adlington
Scriven, Rev. William ...	... Lodge Road Baptist Church, Birmingham
Scott, Rev. Giles ...	... Ribchester District Nonconformists
Shaw, Eli	... Ryecroft Independent Church, Ashton-under-Lyne
Scott, Hudson	... Carlisle Nonconformists
Shaw, John	... Mossley Methodist New Connexion
Scholes, William ...	... Congregational Chapel, Pendlebury
Shaw, Charles	... Congregational Church, Lees
Schnadhorst, F. ...	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Scullard, Rev. H. H. ...	... New Church, Horwich
Seddon, Silas	.. Congregational Church, Little Lever, Bolton
Sibre, Rev. James ...	... Salem Congregational Church, Hull
Selbie, Rev. R. W., B.A.	... Hope Congregational Chapel, Salford
Sharples, Christopher ...	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
Sharples, James ...	... Unitarian Chapel, Stand
Shepley, Thomas ...	.. Sion Baptist Church, Burnley
Shaw, John	... Congregational Church, Regent-street, Barnsley
Shaw, Mr. George ...	... Huddersfield
Shields, Edmund S. ...	... Primitive Methodists, Wisbeach Circuit
Sheavyn, W. S. ...	... Coleshill-st. Congregational Church, Atherstone
Shone, Rev. J. ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Bolton-street, Bury
Shone, William ...	... Methodist New Connexion Church, Brookfield Road, Liverpool
Shaw, William ...	... Baptist Churches, Huddersfield

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Shaw, Jonathan ...	... Abney Chapel, Mossley
Shacleton, William ...	... Sion Baptist Chapel, Burnley
Shaw, Henry	... Cavendish-st. Congregational Chapel, Manchester
Shawcross, William ...	... Unitarian Chapel, Sale
Simon, Rev. E. ...	... Zion Independent Chapel. Manchester
Shepley, James, jun. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Royton
Smeeton, H.	... Nonconformists of Sheddingworth
Shepley, James ...	... South Lancashire Union of Baptist Churches
Silby, Rev. Robert ...	... Baptist Church, Lineholme, Yorkshire
Shaw, Joseph ...	... Independent Church, Bromsgrove
Shorrock, Joseph ...	... Marple Chapel
Shoebotham, Josiah H.	... Edgbaston Congregational Church
Shorrock, Rev. M. ...	... Duke-street Primitive Methodists, Stockport
Shillito, Rev. William ...	... Fawcett-street Congregational Church, Sunderland
Shillito, Rev. Joseph ...	... Lozell's Congregational Church, Birmingham
Sidebottom, Rev. J. ...	... Oldham Ministerial Association
Simpson, Thomas ...	... Surrey Congregational Union
Simson, John	... Baguley Nonconformists
Sinclair, Robert ...	... Hare Court Congl. Church, Canonbury, London
Skemp, William W. ...	... Eccles Congregational Church
Slater, John, jun. ...	... Barnoldswick Nonconformists
Skemp, Charles W. ...	... Brierley Hill Baptist Chapel
Slater, Daniel	... Congregational Church, Kettering
Slater, Rev. J.	...
Slater, Rev. Charles S. ...	... Notts Congregational Union
Smeeton, J.	... Nonconformists of Sheddingworth
Smith, Rev. William ...	... Congregational Church, Douglas
Smith, Rev. J. F. ...	... Unitarian Church, Chesterfield
Smith, C. Fluder ..	... Ramsey Nonconformists
Smith, Mr. Daniel ..	... Brunswick United Methodist Free Church, Bury
Smith, Joseph, M.D. ...	... Warrington Nonconformists
Smith, Rev. J. Kirtain ...	... Flowery Field Christian Church, Hyde
Smith, Robert	... Baptist Chapel, Astley Bridge
Smith, Frederic... ...	... Primitive Methodists, Haslingden
Smith-Pye, John William	... Nether Independent Chapel, Sheffield
Smith, William ...	... Bath Lane Congregational Ch, Newcastle-on-Tyne
Smith, Matthew ...	... Sion Congregational Church, Halifax
Sidebottom, James ...	... Cavendish-street Congregational Ch., Manchester
Smith, Robert	... Maudsley-street Congl. Church, Bolton-le-Moors
Shaw, Henry	... Cavendish Congregational Church, Manchester
Smith, W. Brook ...	... Reeth Nonconformists
Shaw, George	... Baptist Church, Salem-dim-Brook
Smith, Rev. John ...	... Nonconformists, East Dereham
Shaw, C. T.	... Graham-street Chapel, Birmingham
Smithard, Edward ...	... U. F. Methodist Churches, Derby
Smith, David	... U. P. Church, Brunswick-street, Manchester
Smith, Thomas ...	... Park Nonconformist Church, Halifax
Smythe, James Francis ...	... York Baptists
Snape, William ...	... Darwen Baptists, N. E. Lan. Noncon. Association
Snape, Thomas... ...	... L'pool Non. Committee, and U. M. Free Church
Sonman, Rev. Mr. ...	... Bury Nonconformists

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Spencer, Joseph ...	... Cavendish-st. Congregational Church, Manchester
Snell, Rev. Joseph Honey	... Swindon Congregational Church
Spencer, James ...	... Baptist Church, Ramsbottom
Southcombe, Richard ...	... Congregational Committee, Stoke Sub Hambdon
Speed, Rev. Robert ...	... Baptist Chapel, Bradford
Somerville, Rev. Alexander	.. Hollingheads Congregational Church, Chorley
Spence, Frederick ...	... Shepton Mallet Congregational Church
Spencer, L.	... Union Chapel, West Gorton Branch
Spicer, Albert	... Congregational Union, England and Wales
Speakman, Philip ...	... Bethesda Chapel, Runcorn
Spencer, Edmund ...	... Eccles Congregational Church
Springthorpe, Rev. Mr. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Heptonstall
Squier, Rev. R. W. ...	... Stand Unitarian Congregations
Stainsby, Mark	... Saltaire Congregational Church
Standring, Joseph ...	.. West-street Baptist Church, Rochdale
Standring, Thomas ...	... Grimshaw-street Congregational Church, Preston
Stott, James	... Little Lever Congregational Church
Statham, Rev. W. M. ...	... East Riding Congregational Union
Stroyan, Rev. John ...	... Bethesda Congregational Church, Burnley
Starmer, Rev. Henry ...	... Congregational Church, Matlock Bank
Stroyan, Rev. Abraham ...	... Zion Congregational Church, Hyde
Stevenson, Rev. W. R., M.A.	... Nonconformist Association, Nottingham
Stevenson, Rev. John A. M.	... Derby Branch Liberation Society
Stevenson, Rev. John ...	.. Oakengates Congregational Church
Stones, Josiah	... Bowdon District Congregational Union of Cheshire
Stevenson, Rev. E. ...	... Baxter Gate Baptist Church, Loughborough
Storey, Thomas	... Wootton Bassett Nonconformists
Stephens, William ...	... Hope Congregational Church, Salford
Stocks, John	... Union-street Congregational Church, Oldham
Stovel, Rev. Charles ...	... Baptist Union
Stuckbery, Rev. Joseph, B.A.	.. Cuckfield Congregational Union
Stockburn, John S. ...	... Kettering Congregational Union
Stead, Robert	... Methodist Free Church, Wakefield
Stitt, Samuel, J.P. ...	... Nonconformists, Birkenhead
Stafford, John	... Lester and Rutland Congregational Association
Stott, Rev. J. M'Ewan ...	... Chapel-street Congregational Church, Blackburn
Stanesby, Alexander ...	... Baptist Church, Blackburn Road, Accrington
Steinthal, Rev. S. A. ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Standing, Isaac	... Leigh Nonconformists
Stephens, J. M	... Baptist Church, Glossop Road, Sheffield
Stapleton, Rev. John ...	... Baptist Church, Edge Side, Rossendale
Stirling, Rev. James ...	... Congregational Church, City Road, London
Stuart, Rev. James ...	... Congregational Church and Nonconformist Association, Wolverhampton
Sturt, Rev. H.	... Ebenezer Congregational Church, Dewsbury
Stokes, Abel	... Wycliffe Chapel, Bristol Road, Birmingham
Storey, John H	... Sale Congregational Church
Stephens, Rev. Noah ...	... Park Road Congregational Church, Liverpool
Stitt, John J., J.P. ..	... Nonconformist Committee, Liverpool
Stephenson, Thomas ..	... Salem Congregational Chapel, Bradford
Stuart, Rev. W. J. ...	... Baptist Church, Pole-street, Preston

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Stephenson, Rev. John ...	... Primitive Methodists, Grimsby
Street, Rev. J. C. ...	... Nonsubscribing Asso. & Missionry. Conf., Ireland
Stone, George Sully ...	... Hope Baptist Church Canton, Cardiff
Stubbins, Rev. Isaac ...	... Friar Lane General Baptist Church, Leicester
Sugden, Robert... ...	... Pendleton Congregational Church
Sugden, Henry	... Nonconformist Asso., Brighouse and District
Sugden, James	... Pendleton Congregational Church
Spence, Peter	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Sugden, William ...	... Baptist Chapel, Kidderminster
Sutcliffe, Edward ...	... Ryecroft Congregational Church, Ashton
Sutcliffe, Thomas ...	... General Baptist Church, Heptonstall
Sutton, M. B.	... Congregational Church, Junction Road, London
Sweeting, Rev. T. E. ...	... Congregational Church, Tipping-st., Manchester
Swindells, William ...	... Baptist Chapel, Stockport
Swift, John R.... ...	... Primitive Methodists, Leighton
Sykes, Thomas E. ...	... Baptist Chapel, Golcar, Huddersfield
Swallow, George ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Sykes, John	... Polemoor Baptist Chapel
Taylor, Rev. John ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Mossley
Talbot, William ...	. New Meeting, Kidderminster
Taylor, William... ...	... Claremont Baptist Chapel, Bolton
Tanner, Joseph, jun. ...	... Frome Nonconformist Association
Taylor, Francis... ...	... Cheetham Hill Congregational Church
Taylor, H. W. S. ...	... Blackpool Nonconformist Association
Taylor, Richard ...	... Bradford Liberal Society
Taylor, Frank	... Bank-street Chapel Noncon. Association, Bolton
Taylor, George B. ...	... Greenacres Congregational Church
Taylor, Simeon	... Congregational Church, Denton
Tarbotton, G. S. ...	... Cavendish-street Chapel, Manchester
Tarrant, Rev. Henry ...	... Salem Congregational Church, Leeds
Tate, Thomas W. ...	... Toxteth Chapel, Liverpool
Templeton, John, F.R.G.S.	... Baptist Union
Tetley, Rev. W. H. ...	... Baptist Church, Coleford
Tanner, Joseph, jun. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Frome
Thackray, William ...	... Sunderland Nonconformists
Thomas, Rev. John ...	... Welsh Congregationalists, Liverpool
Thomas, Rev. Owen ...	... Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, Liverpool
Thomas, Rev. Nathaniel	... Tabernacle Baptist Church, Cardiff
Thomas, Elias	... Nonconformist Association, Bradford
Thomas, D.	... Dalton-in-Furness Baptist Church
Thomas, W. Hughes ...	... Baptist Church, Tredegarville, Cardiff
Thomas, T. H. ...	... Baptist College, and Local Committee of Education League, Pontypool
Thomas, Rev. William ...	... West Riding Congregational Union
Thompson, David ...	... Miles Platting Unitarian Church, Manchester
Thompson, John ...	.. Congregational Church, Smethwick
Thompson, Rev. G. H. ...	... Nonconformists of Leicester
Thompson, Rev. John, M.A.	... St. Paul's United Presb. Church, Birkenhead
Thompson, Rev. David ...	... Presbytery of Antrim
Thompson, Fred ...	... St. Mary's Gate Baptist Church, Derby
Thompson, T. Henry	... Congregational Church, Bowdon

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Thompson, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Lightcliffe, Halifax
Thomason, Rev. T. W. ...	... Newtown Baptist Church
Thompson, Rev. J. Radford, M.A.	Kent Congregational Association and Tunbridge Congregational Church
Thompson, Joseph ...	... Manchester Nonconformist Association
Thompson, John George...	... Primitive Methodists, Liverpool
Thomson, Rev. Alexander, M.A.,	Manchester Nonconformist Association
Thompson, Rev. Ralph Wardlaw,	Norwood Congregational Church, Liverpool, and Nonconformists' Committee
Thornbrick, Rev. James	... Congregational Church, Barrow-in-Furness
Thorneley, Robert ...	... Grange Lane Baptist Church, Birkenhead
Thorneley, A. W. ...	.. Unitarian Church, Stockport
Thornley, John... ...	... Hanover Circuit, U. M. Free Churches, Sheffield
Turner, Major	... Unitarian Chapel, Stockport
Thorp, W. R.	... Fishergate Baptist Church, Preston
Tilley, Rev. Alfred ...	... Baptist Church, Tredegarville, Cardiff
Tebb, Emmanuel ...	... Methodist Free Churches, Salford
Tickle, Gilbert Y. ...	... Hope Hall Church, Liverpool
Timmis, Frederick ...	... Rugby Baptist Church
Tipping, Joseph ...	... Liberation Society, Ashton
Toller, William... ...	... Congregational Church, Kettering
Toms, Rev. H. Storer ...	... Chase Side Independent Chapel, Enfield
Topp, Captain	... Albert Road Congregational Church, Liverpool
Toome, Joseph V. ...	... Wilts and East Somerset Baptist Churches
Towlson, Joseph ...	... Congregational Church, Tunbridge Wells
Townend, Rev. Joseph ..	... Leeds and Bradford District U. M. F. Churches
Townsend, Rev. W. J. ...	... Methodist New Connexion Church, Halifax
Tootel, Thomas E. ...	... Hurst Primitive Methodists
Towers, T. A.	... Burlington-street Congregational Ch., Liverpool
Towers, Rev. James ...	... United Presb. Church, Grange Road, Birkenhead
Travis, Rev. James ...	... Primitive Methodists, Bolton Circuit
Tubbs, Henry H. ...	... Rusholme Road Cong. Chapel, Manchester
Turland, Ephraim ...	... Cockey Moor Chapel
Turner, Alfred	... Congregational Church, Oakham
Turnbull, Ebenezer ...	... Harpurhey E. U. Congregational Church
Turner, Rev. Henry, B.A.	... Unitarian Church, St. Peter's Gate, Stockport
Turner, William ...	... George-street Baptist Church, Nottingham
Turner, George... ...	... United Methodist Free Church, Rochdale
Tyndal, E. T.	... Church of the Messiah, Birmingham
Turner, Rev. W. ...	... Baptist Church, Wakefield
Underhill, Edward B., LL.B.	... Baptist Union
Urwick, Rev. W. ...	... Cheshire Congregational Union
Ure, Alexander... ..	... Congregational Church, Union-street, Oldham
Vincent, Samuel ...	... Norfolk Baptist Association
Vickers, William ...	... Baptist Church, Derby Road, Nottingham
Viecars, George... ...	... Victoria Road Nonconformist Church, Leicester
Vincent, Henry... ...	...
Wade, Joseph	... Pudsey Congregational Church, Leeds
Wade, Joseph	... Meth. New Con. Ch., Breckfield Road, Liverpool
Waddington, Rev. Joseph	... Denton Independent Church
Waddington, Rev. Dr....	... Congl. Minister, English Association, London

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Waite, Rev. Joseph, B.A.	... Llanmorgan and Carmarthen English Association
Waight, Henry... ...	... Park Chapel Congregational Church, Manchester
Wainwright, B.... ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Bradford
Walker, Rev. G. K. ...	... Congregational Church, Middlewich
Walker, Robert... ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Walker, James... ...	... Armley Nonconformists
Walker, Alfred... ..	... Oakes Chapel, Lindley
Walker, Rev. Benjamin...	... Rochdale Road Domestic Mission Ch., Manchester
Walker, Samuel ...	... Zion Chapel, Methodist New Connexion, Lees
Walker, William ...	... Eccles Congregational Church
Walker, Benjamin ...	... George-st. Independent Church, Heckmondwike
Walker, John	... Ebenezer Chapel, Dewsbury
Walker, Rev. H. F. ...	... Congregationalists of Pendlebury
Wallis, Charles... ...	... Congl. Chapel, Francis Road, Birmingham
Walker, Rev. S. ...	... Congregational Church, Springhead
Wallis, John	... Congregational Church, Kettering
Walter, E. E.	... Nonconformists of Whitehaven
Walton, Rev. James B....	... Congregationalist Church, Dukinfield
Warburton, William ...	... Primitive Methodists, Lancashire Hill, Stockport
Ward, Henry	... Nonconformist Association, Burnley
Warburton, William ...	... Shaftesbury Hall Congregation, Salford
Ward, Rev. R. J. ...	... St. Helens Congregational Church
Ward, John	... Moss Side Baptist Chapel, Manchester
Ward, James	... Nonconformist Association, Cambridge
Wardley, Mr. James ...	... Baptist Church, Over Darwen
Watts, Samuel	... Nonconformist Association, Manchester
Ward, James, B.A. ...	... Congregational Church, Pendleton
Ward, Joseph	... Cavendish-street Cong. Church, Manchester
Warren, Rev. James Boyd	... Nonconformist Association, Bridgnorth
Watts, Rev. Francis ...	...
Wates, Joseph	... Plumstead Baptist Church
Waugh, J.	... St. John's Congregational Church, Blackburn
Watkins, Isaac... ...	... Congregational Church, Lee Lane, Bolton
Watson, Thomas ...	... United Methodist Free Churches, Rochdale
Watts, Rev. Henry ...	... Baptist Church, Barnsley
Watson, William ...	.. Baptist Church Trinity Chapel, Bradford
Watts, Thomas	... Herts and Bedford. Associated Baptist Churches
Wayman, Rev. James ...	... Independent Church, Blackpool
Watts, Rev. James C. ...	... Methodist New Connexion, Burslem
Weaver, Rev. L. ...	... Asso. Churches of Ruyton, Wilcott, and Doncaster
Webb, James	... East Lancashire Union of Baptists
Webb, Lankister ...	... Suffolk Congregational Union
Wells, Frederick ...	... Essex Congregational Union
Wenn, Rev. John ...	... Derby Nonconformist Association
Wenham, John J. ...	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
West, Frederick ...	... Congregational Union, Essex
Westall, William ...	... Independent Church, Great Harwood
West, Edward	...
Waters, Joseph H. ...	... Wilmslow Congregational Church
Watts, Rev. Isaac ...	... General Baptist Church, Macclesfield
Webb, W.	... The Lozell's Congregational Church, Birmingham

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Webster, Hyland ...	... Mill's Hill, Baptist Chapel, Manchester
Webster, George ...	... Rochdale Branch, Education League
Webster, Rev. Peter ...	... Congregational Church, Worsley Road, M'chester
Wells, John S. ...	... Midland Baptist Union
Westley, Joseph ...	... Baptist Church, Blisworth
Wheeler, Thomas ...	... Union-street Congregational Church, Oldham
Wheeler, John ...	... Independent Church, Oldbury
Wheeler, Rev. W. ...	... Stroud Nonconformists
Wheldon, Rev. Thomas, J., B.A.	Calvinistic Methodists, Upper Montgomery
White, Edward W. ...	...
Whittaker, Robert ...	... Chapel-street Congregational Church, Blackburn
Whitehead, Thomas ...	... Norwood Church, Liverpool
Whittaker, John ...	... Burnley Lane, Baptist Church
Whitehead, Rev. George	... Rotherham Baptist Church
Whittaker, Thomas ...	... Baptist Church, Haslingden
Whitely, Joseph ...	... Bowdon Congregational Church
Whittaker, Oswald Lawrence	... Baptist Church, Haslingden
Whiteley, Rev. J. L. ...	... Leicestershire Baptist Association
Whittaker, Lawrence, J.P.	... East Lancashire Baptist Association
Whitridge, J. F. ...	... The Old Chapel, Oswestry
Whittaker, S.	... London Road Congregational Church and Liberation Society, Derby
Whittaker, John ...	... Blackburn Road Baptist Church, Accrington
White, Rev. James ...	... Congregational Church, Clitheroe
Whitham, C. L. ...	... General Noncon. Committee, Midland Association
Whitehead, Charles ...	... Congregational Church, Bowdon Downs
Whitehead, Henry ...	... Congregational Church, Castlecroft, Bury
Whitehead, Rev. J. E. ...	... Horncastle Nonconformists
Whitehead, Adam ...	... Ogden Baptist Church
Whiteley, John... ...	.. Rishworth Baptist Church
Whyte, Rev. T. ...	... Montrose Congregational Church
Wicks, James, jun. ...	... Colchester Nonconformists
Wicksteed, Rev. C., B.A.	... Unitarian Chapel, Liverpool
Wilcock, John	... Bradford Baptist Church
Willcock, William ...	... Charleston Congregational Church, Pendleton
Wild, Samuel	... North Derbyshire Nonconformists
Wild, J. R.	... James-street Congregational Church, Nottingham
Wildgoose, Robert ..	... United Methodist Free Church, Holloway
Wileman, Rev. John ...	... Associated Nonconformist Ministers, Leicester
Wiles, Edward S. ...	... Baptist Church, St. Albans
Wilks, Matthew ...	... Cheetham Hill Congregational Ch., Manchester
Wilkins, Augustus S., M.A.	... Rusholme Congregational Church, Manchester
Wilkinson, Rev. William	... Primitive Methodists, Liverpool, Second Circuit
Wilkinson, Levi ...	... Independent Church, Great Harwood
Wilkinson, Rev. James ...	... Barnoldswick Baptist Church
Wilkinson, Richard ...	... Greenheys Congregational Church, Manchester
Wilinson, Rennie ...	... Congregational Church, Shapstone
Williams, William Henry	... Union Chapel, Islington
Willans, John W. ...	... Lightcliffe Congregational Church
Willans, J. E.	... Nonconformists of Huddersfield
Williams, J. O.... ...	... Hanover Chapel, Stockport

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Williams, Rev. J. L. ...	... Greenacres Parsonage, Oldham
Williams, Rev. H. C. ...	... Corwen District Nonconformists
Williams, J. P.... ...	... English Baptist, Hope Chapel, Canton, Cardiff
Williams, P. Mostyn ...	... Liverpool Welsh Reform Association
Williams, Charles ...	... Congregational Church, Salisbury
Williams, Rev. Richard Gould	... Cornwall Congregational Association
Williams, Rev. William...	... Corwen and Calv. Methodists of Merionethshire
Williams, Rev. William...	... Anglesey Congregational Association
Williams, Thomas ...	... Calvinistic Methodists, Monmouthshire
Williams, Rev. F. S., B.A.	... Nottingham Congregational Union
Williams, William ...	... Welsh Baptist Ch., Upper Medlock-st. M'chester
Williams, Rev. David ...	... Rose Hill Congregational Church, Bolton
Williams, David ...	.. Llanelly Liberals
William, Dr. Thomas ...	... Calvinistic Meth., Lleyn District, Carnarvonshire
Williams, Leonard D. ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Swansea
Williams, Rev. S. T. ...	... London Road Congregational Church, Leicester
Williams, Thomas ...	... East District Glamorgan Congregational Union
Williams, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Netherfield
Williams, Owen ...	... Welsh Presbyterian Church, Heywood-street, Cheetham, Manchester
Williams. J. W. ...	... Nonconformists, Huddersfield
Williams, Rev. Charles	... Association of Baptist Churches, Accrington
Williams, Joseph ...	... Wycliffe Chapel, Birmingham
Williamson, Rev. James	... Congregational Church, Stalybridge
Williamson, William ...	... Worsley Congregational Church
Williamson, J. Wyatt ...	... Congregational Church, Eccles
Willis, Rev. Thomas ...	... Grosvenor-st. Congregational Church, Manchester
Williamson, Rev. John ...	... Congregational Church, Douglas
Willott, Edward ...	... Tyldesley Congregational Church
Wilshire, Rev. Joseph ...	... Silver-street Baptist Church, Taunton
Wilshere, Thomas ...	... Nonconformist Committee, Leicester
Wilson, Rev. Henry ...	... Congregational Church, Ashton-in-Makerfield
Wilson, J. Wycliffe ...	... Nether Chapel, Sheffield
Wilson, Thomas Richmond	... Sunderland Nonconformists
Wilson, Joseph ...	... Toxteth Congregational Church, Liverpool
Wilson, C. S. ...	... Salem Congregational Church, Bradford
Wilson, Rev. Alex., B.A.	... Stockport Nonconformist Association
Wilson, William ...	... Congregational Church, St. Helens
Wilson, J. H. ...	... Congregational Church, Walsden
Wilson, Rev. Joseph ...	... Congregational Church, Bretherton, Preston
Wilson, Rev. James ...	... Derbyshire County Union
Winder, Thomas H. ...	... Bolton Nonconformists
Windsor, Rev. Thomas ...	... Congregational Church, Skipton
Winks, A.	... Union Chapel, West Gorton Branch, Manchester
Winterbotham, Edward W.	... Nonconformists, Stroud
Winward, Thomas ...	... Daubhill Congregational Church, Bolton
Withers, Samuel ...	... West Bromwich Nonconformists
Wishart, Rev. James ...	... Congregational Church, Liverpool
Withington, Rev. S. S. ...	... United Methodists, London District
Wolstenholme, Rev. J. R., M.A.	Congregational Church and Congl. Union, Notts
Wolfendale Rev. James	... Congregational Church, Tutbury

DELEGATES.	CONSTITUENCY.
Wood, Rev. Joseph ...	... Congl. Ch. and Noncon. Association, Leicester
Wood, Richard... ...	... Miles Platting Sunday School, Manchester
Wood, James	... Bethesda Congregational Church, Burnley
Wood, Thomas... ...	... Union-street Congregational Church, Hyde
Wood, Mr.	... Methodist New Connexion, Miles Platting
Wood, Edward ...	... Congregational Union, Nottingham
Woods, Rev. Wm. ..	... Midland Baptist Union
Woodall, Clement ...	... Hanover Congregational Church, Stockport
Woodcock, John Dale ...	... Queen-street Chapel, Leeds
Woodhams, Frederick ...	.. Greek-street Baptist Chapel, Stockport
Woodfin, Mr.	... Chapel-street Chapel, Wem
Woodhouse, Rev. J. T. ...	... The Tabernacle, Stockport
Woodroffe, D.	.. Congregational Church, Rugeley
Woollard, Edwin ...	... Maudsley-street Congregational Church, Bolton
Worboys, Rev. C. ...	... Methodist Free Churches, Northwich
Worth, Rev. John W. ...	... Methodist Free Church, Hanover-street, Bolton
Worth, B.	... Methodist New Connexion, Stalybridge
Worthington, Jeffery ...	... Bank-street Chapel, Bolton
Worthington, Rev. A. W.	... North Mid. Presbyterian and Unitn. Association
Wright, Joseph... ...	... Townley-street Congregational Ch., Macclesfield
Wright, John J. ...	... Central Nonconformist Committee, Birmingham
Wright, Rev. John ...	... Monthly Meeting of Ministers, Manchester
Wright, Thomas ...	... Moss Side Baptist Church, Manchester
Wright, Rev. J. Morley...	... St. James's Congregational Church, Nottingham
Wright, Rev. Samuel ...	... Methodist Free Churches, Sheffield
Wrigley, Rev. W. A. ..	... Carlisle Noncon. and Cong. Union, Cumberland
Wycherley, J.	... United Methodist Free Church, Liverpool
Yates, John	... Methodist New Connexion, Lees
Yates, Robert	... Salem Chapel, Bradford
Yates, Rev. S.	... Congregational Church, Runcorn
Young, John	... Nonconformist Association, Bury
Young, Rev. W. ...	... Congregational Church, Wirksworth
Young, Rev. Benjamin C.	... Baptist Chapel, Coseley, near Bilston
Yonge, Rev. J.	... Independent Chapel, Heywood
Young, Rev. Henry ...	... Independent Chapel, Levenshulme

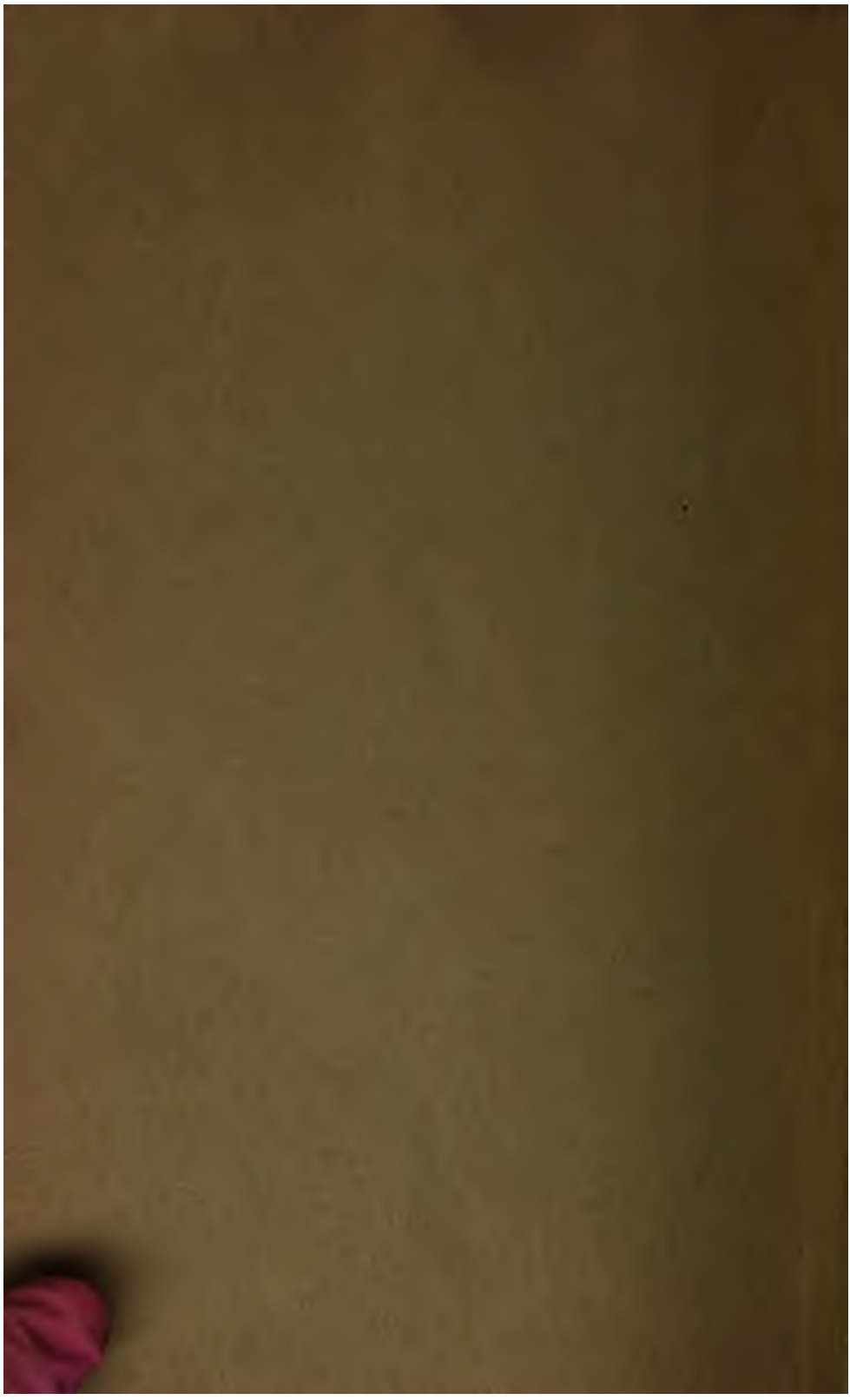
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